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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

OF

ASIATIC HISTORY.

THE SARACEN

BOSTON:
C. H. PEIRCE AND G. C. RAND.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

OF

ASIATIC HISTORY:

BY THE AUTHOR OF

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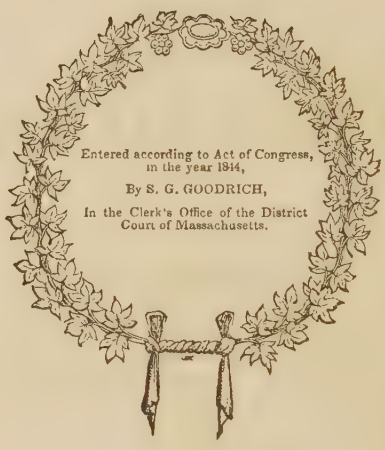
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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

OF

ASIA.

INTRODUCTION.

Asia, occupying the eastern portion of the Eastern Continent, is nearly equal in extent to Europe and Africa united. It is surrounded by sea through much

the greater part of its outline, which, though marked by large gulfs and peninsulas, presents generally a huge, unbroken mass, formed into a kind of irregular square. Its most northerly point is in latitude 77° north, its most southerly in latitude 2° north, making its utmost length about 75 degrees of latitude. Its whole extent may be estimated at 18,000,000 square miles, being about one third part of the land upon the surface of the globe. Its population is about 500,000,000, being more than half the population of the whole world.

The physical features of Asia are very striking. It presents every variety of climate, from the dreary confines of the polar world to the heart of the tropical regions. Its rivers yield in magnitude only to those of the Western Continent; its towering mountains surpass all others in elevation; its immense salt lakes, or inland seas, its wide deserts, its extensive plains, are among its distinguishing features.

The natural productions of Asia are not less striking than its geographical features. It abounds in the richest minerals, and yields every variety of precious gem. The vegetable kingdom presents us with the choicest fruits and flowers, with costly gums and fragrant spices. Nor is the animal kingdom less remarkable and diversified. From this region we have derived the horse, the peacock, the pheasant, and our barn-door fowls. Every thing in Asia seems to have been formed on a scale of magnificence and profusion, in which all that is grand is blended with all that is beautiful.

Nor are the historical and moral phenomena of this portion of the globe less wonderful. Here the first human pair were created, and here the history of the

human family begins. By the united testimony of sacred and profane history, Asia was not only the cradle of mankind, but the great nursery of nations. Agreeably to the received chronology of the Scriptures, Adam was created about six thousand years ago. After the flood, the human race increased with amazing rapidity and thus mankind, in successive swarms, spread themselves not only over every portion of Asia, but over Europe, Africa, and America. In its political aspect, Asia presents us with many remarkable phenomena. Here Assyria, the first great empire that appears in the page of history, had its beginning and end. Here Babylon, the wonder of all ages, rose to excite the admiration of the world, and to become a fearful witness, as well to the truth of prophecy as to the justice of Heaven. Here China, the oldest and the most extensive of empires, — beginning at a period now lost in the mists of fable, — exhibits a spectacle which may well excite our astonishment; a nation, now numbering 360,000,000, held together by a single thread, — that of discipline and authority, — and continuing for ages in a state of unexampled tranquillity.

Here, also, is the empire of Japan, which continues, to the present day, a riddle and a mystery. Here originated the Turks, a nation of barbarians, who have established their sway in Europe, and, for nearly four centuries, have not only occupied the capital of the Roman emperors, but have exercised dominion over the land of Leonidas, Aristides, and Pericles. Here the wandering Arabs, a people whose "hand is against every man, and every man's hand against" them, have continued for ages, without improvement or change.

Here the Saracens ran their brilliant career. Here Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt. Here are Sinai, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. Here David reigned and Isaiah prophesied. Here Solomon built his temple. Here Jesus Christ was offered up as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

Nor have we yet mentioned the most remarkable feature of Asiatic history. It is in this portion of the globe that all the great religions which now exercise dominion over mankind have had their origin — Judaism, Budhism, Lamaism, Christianity, and Mahometanism. To the latter faith, more than one fourth part of mankind are devoted.

EARLY HISTORY OF ASIA.

That Asia was the cradle of the human race, as we have already stated, is not only a belief which has existed from the earliest period of history, but the fact is supported by the strongest of collateral evidence. In this portion of the globe are those lofty and extensive mountains, surpassing in height all others in the world, round which the earliest and widest tracts of land formed themselves, by the gradual upheaving of the rocky ridges and the subsidence of the waters. On these mountains, doubtless, dwelt the greater num-

ber of all the species of the animal creation, while the rest of the earth lay under water, scarcely exhibiting the naked or wood-crowned summits of its mountains. Thus that great eminence which Linnæus imagined as the "Hill of Creation," actually exists in nature, not as a mere mountain, but as a wide amphitheatre, a constellation of mountains, the arms of which stretch out into various climates. It appears, also, that not only the most spacious tracts, but the most fertile soil, settled round these loftiest heights of the globe, attracting to itself, from the beginning, the greatest share of generative warmth. It is demonstrable from history that Europe was supplied with men and animals chiefly from Asia, and was, probably, for the most part, covered with water, or with forests and morasses, when the higher land of Asia was already under cultivation.

Whence are derived all the nations of Europe? From Asia, we confidently reply. Of most of them we know this with certainty. We are acquainted with the origin of the Goths, Germans, Celts, Cimbri, Gauls, Slavonians, Laplanders, Fins, and others; partly from their languages, or the remains of them, and partly from history, we can trace them to Tartary, or the borders of the Black Sea.

The most anciently-cultivated languages in the world are to be found in Asia. To that country are we indebted for the alphabet. The earliest polished nation of Europe, the Greeks, borrowed their letters from the East. If we proceed from the instruments of civilization to civilization itself, we shall find that it originated in Asia, from which quarter it was propagated through channels of which we are not wholly ignorant. The

sovereignty over animals was one of the first steps towards it; and, in Asia, this may be traced back beyond all the revolutions of history. Some of our most useful quadrupeds, as the sheep, the goat, and the dog, are, in fact, new varieties of animals produced by Asiatic art. Europe is indebted to Asia for almost all its tame animals. The cultivation of the earth and its plants has proceeded in a similar manner. A great part of Europe, down to a comparatively late period, was covered with forests, and the inhabitants could procure no vegetable food except roots, wild herbs, and acorns. In many parts of Asia, different species of grain grow spontaneously, and husbandry there dates from time immemorial. The finest fruits of the earth — the grape, the olive, the fig, the pomegranate, the almond, the orange, nuts, chestnuts, and almost all the productions of our gardens and orchards — were brought first from Asia into Africa and Greece, and from these to the neighboring countries.

That the arts and sciences were first cultivated in Asia and in the adjacent country of Egypt, requires no elaborate proof; ancient monuments, and the history of nations, affirm it. In that part of the world, both the useful and ornamental arts were known very early, and were every where marked with an Asiatic character. The lofty poetry of the southern Asiatic nations is universally known; and, the more ancient we find it, the more it exhibits of a sublime and noble simplicity. The commerce of the Asiatics is the most ancient upon earth, and the most important inventions relative to commerce are theirs. Lastly, if forms of government be the most difficult of the arts of civiliza-

tion, where do we find the most ancient and extensive monarchies? Where have the empires of the world found their firmest establishment? China has maintained its ancient constitution for thousands of years; and, though that unwarlike country has been more than once overrun by Tartar hordes, the vanquished people have always civilized their vanquishers, and imposed upon them the chains of their old constitution. The most ancient hierarchy upon earth rests on the mountains of Thibet. The castes of the Hindoos indicate their primeval establishment from the deep-rooted power which has existed for ages among the gentlest of people. Warlike or peaceable established monarchies, on the Tigris and Euphrates, on the banks of the Nile, and the mountains of Media, interfere in the history of the western nations in the remotest times. From every corner of the world, the nearer we approach Asia, the nearer we come to firmly-established kingdoms. The most firmly-rooted despotisms in Africa are seated nearest to Asia; and, the farther we retire from it, the ruder becomes the state of tyranny, till, at length, it is lost among the Caffres, in the patriarchal condition of the shepherd. The general aspect of Asia, particularly about the mountains, indicates the most ancient habitation; and the traditions of the Asiatics, with their religions and chronologies, ascend, as is well known, to the primitive ages. All the mythologies of the Europeans and Africans, and still more of the Americans and South Sea Islanders, are but scattered fragments of modern fables, compared with the gigantic structures of ancient cosmogony in India, Thibet, and Chaldea, — mere confused sounds

of an evanescent echo from the voice of the primitive Asiatic world, losing itself in fiction.

When did the world begin? When and how were new nations formed? Shall we follow the voice of tradition, and endeavor to trace it to its original source? This, it must be confessed, is an uncertain path, as if a man were to pursue the rainbow, or chase an echo; for, as a child is incapable of giving an account of his birth, as little ought we to expect that the human race can tell us of its creation and first lessons, the invention of language, and its primitive seat, with the accuracy of authentic history. Yet a child remembers, at least, some circumstances of his youth; and, if several children, who were educated together, and afterwards separated, relate the same or very similar things, why should we not bestow some credit upon them?

The Chinese, who boast of the highest antiquity, have no authentic history prior to the year 722 before Christ. The reigns of Fo-hi and Hwang-ti are mythological; and the time anterior to Fo-hi — the age of spirits, or of the elements personified — is considered as allegorical fiction by the Chinese themselves. The most ancient monuments in China have a Hindoo character. In the more elevated region of Thibet, we find the whole mythology of that ecclesiastical empire resting upon the tradition of a lofty central mountain; its height and circumference are tremendously depicted; monsters and giants are its guards; seven seas and seven mountains of gold surround it; the *lahs* dwelt on its summit, and other beings on various inferior stages. These contemplators of heaven had been sinking for ages into grosser bodies, till they

arrived at the human form, in which a frightful pair of apes were their progenitors.

Much of the early tradition of the Hindoos is lost, yet some primitive relics remain, mixed up with later fables. The Ganges, for instance, is sacred throughout all Hindostan, and flows immediately from the holy mountains, the feet of Brahma, the creator of the world. Vishnu appears, in his eighth metamorphosis, as Prassarama; the water still covered all the land except the Ghauts Mountains. He entreated the god of the sea to give him room, and to withdraw the flood as far as he could shoot an arrow. The god promised. Prassarama shot, and the land dried as far as the arrow flew, which was to the coast of Malabar. Under this fable is couched the undoubted fact that the sea once reached to the Ghauts, and that the coast of Malabar is more recent land.

The doctrine of Zoroaster is evidently a philosophic system; yet it contains traces of a primitive tradition. The great mountain Albordy appears again in the centre of the earth; the sun revolves round it, and it sends forth all the rivers. The forms of things existed first in prototypes and germs; and, as in all the other mythologies of higher Asia, the primitive world abounds with monsters. How are we astonished to find these marvels almost realized in the discoveries of modern geology, which offer to our view races of extinct animals, of strange and gigantic structure, such as human extravagance had hardly ever conceived of before!

The farther we proceed west from the Asiatic mountains, the shorter we find the periods of time, and the more modern the origin of the primitive world. In all

hese tales we perceive the application of foreign traditions from a higher to a lower region of territory. They become less and less adapted to local circumstances; but, on this account, the system itself gains in fulness and clearness, as only a few fragments of the ancient fable occasionally appear, and these few are clad in a more modern national garb. Had Moses been nothing more than the collector of these ancient traditions, he, a learned Egyptian, could not have been ignorant of those almost interminable ages of gods and demi-gods with which both the Asiatics and the Egyptians began the history of the world. Why, then, did he symbolically compress the origin of the world into the smallest space of time? Evidently because he was desirous of obliterating these notions from men's minds as useless fables. In this he acted wisely; for, previous to the origin of the human species and its connected history, there could be for us no chronology deserving the name. The rock of our earth is very ancient, and its covering has undergone long revolutions, of which there can be no doubt. Moses frames no epochs for these changes, but represents his connected, systematic picture in the readiest cycle of a terrestrial revolution. The longer these revolutions have continued, the younger must necessarily be the human species.

As we have before stated, the chronology of the Bible, as adjusted by learned commentators, dates the beginning of the human species at a period about six thousand years ago. It is evident, from the researches of modern geologists, that, while this is correct, the world had existed for ages before, undergoing a process of

preparation for the residence of man and the present races of animals. During this period of darkness, the earth was inhabited by races of monsters now extinct. Many of these, doubtless, yet lived in the early ages of mankind, and may have furnished the monstrous and grotesque images that fill the fables of antiquity.

The internal history of the earth shows that the organic powers of nature were every where active in its formation at the same time, and that, wherever any one could exert itself, there it was exerted. The earth vegetated as soon as it was capable of vegetation. The sea swarmed with living beings as soon as it was sufficiently purified for them. The different kinds of creatures followed each other as their nature and their element would permit, and man, the most perfect of created beings, appeared, the last of the series. Thus it seems that the work of creation proceeded according to certain laws still in operation. All the Asiatic traditions refer the origin of the human race to a region in the neighborhood of the Himalaya Mountains, the loftiest heights on the globe. The beautiful vale of Cashmere, situated at the head of the two great rivers of India, walled round with the highest mountains in the world, famed no less for the salubrity of its streams of water than for the fertility of its soil and its freedom from wild beasts and venomous reptiles, and even now esteemed, from the beauty of its inhabitants, as the Paradise of Paradises, possesses the strongest claim to be considered the primitive seat of the human race. It is one of the most extensive of the alpine valleys of the Himalaya range, between the 33d and the 35th degrees of northern latitude, and is about

seventy-five miles in length, varying from fifteen to thirty-six miles in breadth. It is noted for the mildness and salubrity of its climate, and no poisonous or carnivorous animals have ever been known to exist within its limits. The modern inhabitants speak a language akin to the Sanscrit, one of the oldest languages of the world.

The Mosaic history, which is our only sure guide as to the early history of mankind, is, in some respects, very general. We are told the name of the first man, but not what tongue he spoke. *Adam* signifies "a man of earth," and *Eve* "a living creature," in the language of the people who employ these names. These appellations, however, are doubtless to be regarded as symbols of their history; and other significant names are given them by other nations. The inventions enumerated by Moses are such only as suited a pastoral and agricultural people in the west of Asia. His history of the first families of the human race, though literally true, furnishes also a sort of verbal hieroglyphics, with which are depicted the genealogical trees of people living in the different modes of shepherds and of husbandmen, or dwellers in caves.

Respecting the history of the antediluvian race, we have abundance of allegories, in the traditions of the Asiatics, coinciding with the Mosaic record. The first abode of man was a garden, where he lived in a perfect state of innocence and purity. This is such a tradition as philosophy could not invent. For new-born man, it is, indeed, the easiest way of life; since every other, that of the husbandman not excepted, requires art and experience of various kinds; but it requires

the light of revelation to discover such a truth. The story of the garden of Eden instructs us in that which the whole disposition of our nature confirms — that man was not formed to live in savage wildness, but in tranquillity; and thus, as the Creator best knew the destination of his creatures, man, like all the rest, was created, as it were, in his element, — in the seat of that kind of life for which he was intended. Every degree of wildness in the human race is a degeneracy to which man has been compelled by necessity, climate, or the habitual sway of some passion. Whenever these impulses cease to act, men live more peaceably, as history shows. Thus, as, in the earliest ages, mankind dwelt in peace, the most ancient traditions of the nations of the world knew nothing of those forest monsters who murderously roamed about for thousands of years, inhuman by nature. These wild tales began in distant, ruder regions, after the wide dispersion of mankind; later poets willingly copied them; these the compiling historian followed, and him the metaphysician.

Of all the miraculous and romantic things with which the Asiatic traditions have stored their paradise of the primitive world, there is nothing which, in beauty and meaning, can compare with the pictures presented to us in the sacred volume. Though we are disposed to receive that holy book in its literal and obvious sense, yet how true and instructive, and how much above the human learning of that age, would the account of our first parents be, regarded only as a philosophic tale! In Eden was one forbidden tree; and this tree, in the persuasion of the serpent, bore the fruit of divine

knowledge, for which man longs. Could he yearn for any thing superior? Could he be more ennobled in his fall? Compare this narrative, considered as an allegory, with the tales of other nations, and it is, of all, the most refined and beautiful, — a symbolical representation of what has ever been the cause of human happiness and misery. Our ambitious striving after knowledge not suited to us; the irregular use and abuse of our liberty; the restless extension and infraction of those limits within which it is necessary that moral laws should confine a creature so feeble, who is compelled to learn self-government, — form the fiery wheel under which we groan, and which still constitutes nearly the whole circle of our life. The Hebrew lawgiver knew this as well as we know it, and delivers it in a form which, be it taken literally or symbolically, embraces the leading purposes of the life of man. In teaching the same truth, the Hindoos tell us of giants digging for the fruit of immortality; the Thibetans talk of their *lahs*, degraded by misdeeds; but nothing equals the clear meaning, depth, and infantile simplicity, of this Mosaic record.

Man, having acquired a knowledge of evil, found it work to his own injury; he removed into another place, and began a new and more artificial way of life. The remainder of the antediluvian history will require no illustration. We now come to that remarkable occurrence, the deluge. It appears certain, from natural history, that the habitable earth has been ravaged by an inundation; and the indications of it are particularly strong in Asia. Yet what is delivered to us in the book of Moses has been regarded, by some learned

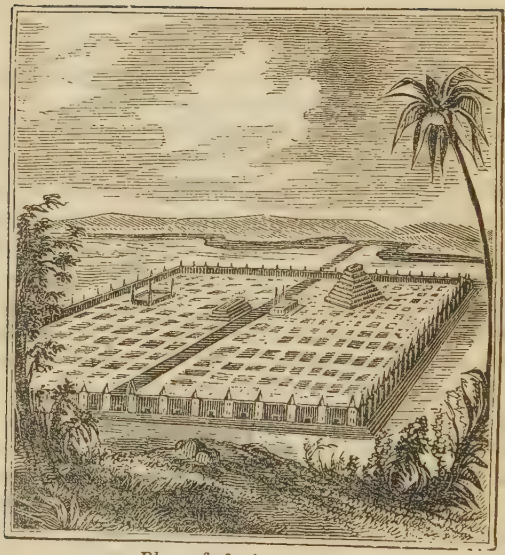
men, as a national, and not a general, story of the event. The style of his narrative, as they contend, is so adapted to the mode of thinking among the Hebrews, that we are not justified in extending it beyond certain limits. As one family of this people, with a considerable household, escaped, so other families, of other nations, it is said, may have been saved, as their traditions show. Thus, in Chaldea, Xisuthrus is represented as having escaped, with his family and a number of cattle. In India, Vishnu was the rudder of the ship which conveyed the distressed people to land. Similar tales exist among all the ancient nations of the globe, even in America and in the South Sea Islands, adapted to the traditions and circumstances of each. We conceive, however, that the deluge was universal, and these accounts are but traditions, originally gathered from the Mosaic account.

The family of Noah, after the deluge, divided into three branches, consisting of the descendants of the three sons of the patriarch, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. These names are significant. Japhet is, agreeably to his name and his blessing, "far extended." Accordingly, the race of Japhet dispersed themselves over Europe. Shem signifies "that which remains," or "is fixed." The Shemites remained in Asia, and built cities. Ham derived his name from heat, and thus settled in Africa, within the torrid zone. Thus we see that, from the three sons of Noah, the three quarters of the globe, Europe, Asia, and Africa, first derived their population.

The provinces bordering upon the Euphrates, supposed, by many, to have been the first settled after the

flood, were certainly among the first that became populous. There, in a mild climate, the wants of man were comparatively few, and those were plentifully supplied by a soil of exuberant fertility, level to a vast extent, naturally unencumbered with wood, and consequently little exposed to the ravages of wild beasts. The families remaining in the country were not likely soon to lose the civilization and science of their forefathers. Accordingly, whether they retained or invented these arts, it is certain that astronomy and dialing existed among the Babylonians at a period too remote to furnish us with the means of investigating their origin; and, notwithstanding the deep obscurity in which the invention of letters is involved, we can still trace every known alphabet to the neighborhood of Babylon. If it were of any avail to reason upon the subject, we might maintain that language must have been the outright gift of the Creator to man. Such languages as exist among all countries appear to be beyond the power of human invention. Man, without language, is a savage — but little more than a gifted animal. Without language, there could be no arts, no great diversity of knowledge, no great expansion of intellect. How could he, in such a condition, make even the first advances toward self-cultivation? The most reasonable supposition, and that, also, which best coincides with the account furnished in the inspired pages, is, that language was a patrimony derived by man from his Creator.

BABYLON.



Plan of Ancient Babylon.

While the rest of mankind were distributing themselves over different parts of the earth, a multitude of people remained in the plains of Shinar, where the mighty tower of Babel had been reared. As this country was warm and fertile, they increased rapidly;

and here, in process of time, rose the first great empire which figures in history. This was Assyria; and Ashur, the grandson of Noah, is said to have been its first ruler.

In the year 2229, he built the city of Nineveh; but Babylon, which was soon after founded, and became the capital of the empire, greatly surpassed it in splendor. It is said, by some writers, to have owed its foundation to Queen Semiramis, a person whose history, as it is handed down by tradition, seems to consist rather of entertaining fictions than substantial realities. By other authors, the foundation of the city is ascribed to Belus, and Nebuchadnezzar is allowed to have completed the labor. It stood on the Euphrates, in the middle of a wide plain, and was built in the form of an exact square, each side being fifteen miles in extent. Herodotus visited this magnificent and wonderful metropolis, and has left a minute description of it in his history. The walls were eighty-seven feet thick, and three hundred and fifty in height; they were built of bricks, cemented with bitumen, and a wide ditch ran all round the city. One hundred gates, of solid brass, afforded a passage through the walls; between every two were four towers, and four more were at the four corners of the city. From all the gates proceeded streets, in straight lines, crossing each other at right angles, which gave the place a formal and monotonous air, and indicates a want of taste for the picturesque in the founder. The river ran through the city from north to south, and was bordered on both sides by walls as massy as the exterior walls. In these walls, too, were brazen gates, and steps leading from them to the water. A bridge

crossed the river, of great beauty and admirable contrivance, resting upon piers of large stones fastened together with iron chains. As the Euphrates overflows, during the summer, by the melting of the snow on the mountains of Armenia, two canals were cut, to turn the course of the waters into the Tigris, and vast artificial embankments were raised on each side of the river. At each end of the bridge stood a palace, and they communicated with each other by a tunnel under the stream.

The ancient palace, on the eastern side, was nearly four miles in the circuit of its walls, and the other seven miles and a half. This latter was encompassed with three walls, one within the other, all adorned with curious sculptures. Among these was a gigantic hunting-piece, representing wild beasts; and in the centre was a statue of Semiramis, on horseback, in the act of throwing her javelin at a leopard, while her husband, Ninus, appeared in close contest with a lion. This palace contained, among other works of magnificence, three brazen rooms, one under each gate, in which certain festivals were celebrated, and which were opened by a mechanical contrivance.

To this palace were attached the hanging gardens so often mentioned by the Greek writers, and with such high admiration. They were carried up into the air by building rows of terraces, one above the other, till their height equalled that of the city walls. On the top of these terraces were first laid large, flat stones: over these was a layer of reeds, mixed with bitumen: and on these were bricks, closely cemented with plaster. The whole was covered with thick sheets of

lead, upon which lay the mould of the garden, which was so deep that large trees took root in it. On the upper terrace was an hydraulic engine, by which water was raised from the river to irrigate the garden. Orchards, plants, and flowers, of every description, adorned this singular structure; it was surrounded with magnificent pavilions, which had large apartments, affording the most delightful prospects. Respecting the origin of the hanging gardens, we are told that Amytis, the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, having been brought up in Media, was enchanted with that woody and mountainous country, and wished to have something like it in Babylon. This extravagant desire was gratified by the erection of this prodigious edifice. This account is consistent with what we know of the strange and inordinate caprices of Oriental despotism.

Near the centre of the city stood the temple of Belus. This was circular, and of eight stories, diminishing upwards, and its height was six hundred and sixty feet. In the different stories were rooms of great extent, having arched roofs, supported by pillars. The wealth of this temple, in statues, tables, censers, cups, and other sacred implements of massy gold, was almost incredible. Diodorus makes it amount to a hundred millions of dollars. It was consecrated to the worship of Belus, or Baal. On the summit were three golden statues of Jupiter, Juno, and Rhea. That of Jupiter was forty feet high. Rhea sat on a golden throne, with lions at each knee, and two serpents of silver. Juno stood erect, grasping a serpent and a sceptre enriched with gems. A table of beaten gold was common to these divinities, forty feet in length,

and fifteen in breadth; on this stood goblets, censers, and vases, of prodigious value. On the summit of the tower was also an observatory.

The population of Babylon was not equal to its vast extent. It was not compactly built, but the houses were, for the most part, separated from each other by gardens and wide spaces — a plan dictated by the necessity of a free ventilation in that hot climate. Many of the great cities of Hindostan are built in the same manner at the present day. Babylon also comprised, within its walls, large spaces of waste ground, as we learn from Quintus Curtius, who states that, when Alexander visited the city, considerable portions were not occupied by buildings, but were ploughed and sown. It appears, therefore, that the original design was never fully completed.

The history of Babylon, from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to its capture by Cyrus, king of Persia, is involved in much obscurity. At the battle of Thymbria, Cyrus defeated the Babylonians, and then laid siege to the city. The enormous height and thickness of the walls seemed to bid defiance to all his attacks. The place was provisioned for twenty years, and the Babylonians confidently expected to weary out the patience of the besiegers. Cyrus, finding it impossible to batter down the walls, adopted another method to penetrate into the city. He caused two broad canals to be cut round it, to receive the waters of the Euphrates; then, damming up the main stream, which forced it to pass through the canals, he laid its channel bare, and, at night, made his way, in its bed, under the walls. Thus he entered the place, while the Babylonians were

revelling in a drunken festival. The city was taken, the king and his nobles were put to the sword, and the Babylonian empire was overthrown.

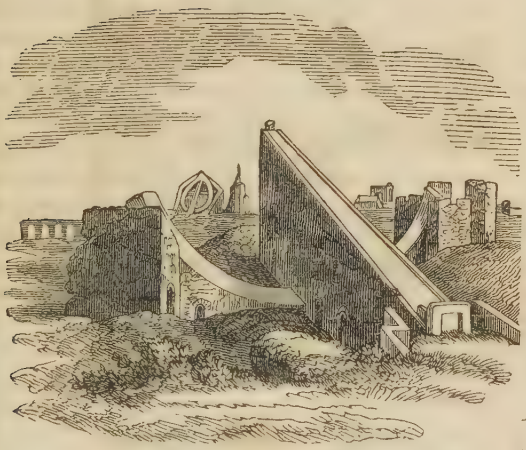
Cyrus did no injury to the city; on the contrary, he made it his winter residence, and the third capital of his kingdom, after Susa and Ecbatana. But, in consequence of a revolt under Darius I., the walls and gateways were broken down, and the population decreased to such a degree, that a supply from the surrounding country became requisite. Xerxes carried away the golden statue of Belus, and Alexander found the temple of that deity in ruins. Soon afterwards, Seleucus founded the city of Selcucia in the neighborhood of Babylon, which further contributed to its decline. In the time of Diodorus and Strabo, the greater part of Babylon lay in ruins, and the precincts of that proud metropolis comprised a wide extent of cornfields. Quintus Curtius informs us that, in his time, only a fourth part of the city was inhabited. Under the Parthian kings, it had fallen into such decay as to be used merely as a park for the diversion of hunting.

The ruins of this magnificent city may be traced, at the present day, near the town of Hilleh. They consist of mounds of earth, formed by the decomposition of buildings, channeled and furrowed by the weather. The surface of these mounds is strewed with fragments of brick, bitumen, and pottery. There are also vestiges of palaces and fortifications. One of these, called the *Mujelibe*, or the *overturned*, was two hundred feet in height, when visited by the traveller Pietro della Valle, two centuries ago, but is now much reduced in size. This is supposed to be a rem-

nant of the hanging gardens. Another pile, called the *Birs Nemroud*, is thought to be the temple of Belus. Notwithstanding that all the cities in the neighborhood of Babylon have been built out of its ruins, prodigious heaps of them still remain.

The desolation which pervades the seat of this city, once so magnificent, is calculated to impress the mind with the terrific prophecy, of the fulfilment of which the present scene is a striking witness. When the great metropolis was in the midst of its strength and splendor, Isaiah said, "Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and the houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there." Travellers tell us that these words, uttered so long ago, and at a period so little likely to be realized, are a striking description of what is to be seen among the ruins of Babylon. Bats and owls dwell in its caves, and jackals and other savage animals prowl among the fragments of the mighty wreck.

HINDOSTAN.



Observatory at Delhi.

Hindostan, or India, is a country more distinguished for the vicissitudes of fortune which mark its history, and more remarkable for the peculiarity of its inhabitants, productions, and physical aspect, than, perhaps, any other territory on the face of the earth. The extent and volume of its two celebrated rivers, — the Ganges and the Indus, — which, after diffusing verdure and

Brahma.

Vishnu.

Siva.

plenty through many rich and powerful kingdoms, fall into the ocean at the distance of twelve hundred miles from each other; the stupendous height of those ranges of mountains which, as an everlasting barrier, gird it on three sides, and of which another mighty ridge, extending through its whole length from north to south, exhibits, at opposite extremities, the phenomenon of two seasons at one period; the luxuriant beauty and fertility of its plains; the fragrance of its aromatic woods; the delicious flavor of its fruits; the immense treasures poured forth from its subterranean regions; together with the richness and variety of its manufactures, — have rendered India, from the remotest antiquity, equally the wonder of the curious and the delight of the voluptuous; the object of contemplation to the philosopher, and, too frequently, of rapacity to the barbarous and greedy conqueror.

Hindostan is bounded on the north by that sublime range of mountains which bears the name of *Himmaleh*, and projects southward, in the shape of a vast peninsula, into the Indian Ocean, terminating in Cape Comorin. It extends from 8° to 34° of north latitude, and its area contains 1,400,000 square miles. Its present population is estimated at 140 millions. The country has been, in modern times, divided into several independent kingdoms, most of which have become subject to the British East India Company, within the compass of the last sixty years. Their dominion, which extends over a population of 130 millions, presents the most remarkable political phenomenon of the present age.

However the natives of Hindostan may now exhibit

a striking spectacle of imbecility and dependence, they still trace back their history to an incredible degree of antiquity. The early Hindoo writers, according to Pliny, boasted of a succession of great, wise, and powerful princes, who reigned over the country before the invasion of Alexander the Great. These exaggerated accounts, however, have been proved to be utterly repugnant to reason, and to every just system of chronology. The pretensions of the Hindoos, as a nation, to high antiquity, are, indeed, readily admitted; but this antiquity is carried back to a period so remote, that its extravagance must be apparent to the most superficial observer. Secluded from any immediate intercourse with the neighboring countries by the peculiarity of its customs and religion, India was governed, during the very early periods of its history, by one supreme ruler, under whom were other great feudatory princes, the extent of whose dominions varied at different eras, according to the peaceful or aspiring disposition of the sovereign. These were armed with the full powers of monarchy in their several governments, and, as we are informed by Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, were absolute proprietors of land in their several jurisdictions. They claimed affinity with the sun and moon; and, being assisted in their administration of affairs by the counsels of the Brahmins, who, like the Magi, discharged at once the sacred functions of the priesthood, and the high, hereditary office of counsellors to the monarch, were regarded with a reverence that bordered on adoration. The domestic history of these ancient dynasties is involved in impenetrable obscurity. Their names

alone remain, a dead letter on the recording tablet of time, except as exhibiting an instructive lesson upon the vanity of human grandeur and the pride of royalty.

The inhabitants of India were then, as they are at present, divided into various tribes or *castes*. The great ingenuity of the Hindoos in all the mechanical arts; their genius for commerce, which they carried on to a considerable extent with ancient Egypt and Arabia; the liberal hospitality, love of truth, and rigid temperance and frugality, by which they were distinguished; and, above all, the profound learning and lofty precepts of morality inculcated by the ancient Brahmins, are celebrated with lavish encomiums, not only by the authors already mentioned, but by many others of the most respectable character for veracity in pagan antiquity. But the modern successors of those holy sophists are supposed to have mutilated and corrupted the simple and sublime doctrines of the founder of their social and ethical system, by adopting the most absurd superstitions, and devoting themselves to the grossest idolatry. It has been conjectured by intelligent writers —little acquainted, however, with the genius of the Hindoos —that many of these superstitions were borrowed from the Egyptians during their intercourse, in succeeding ages, with that people; and, in the monstrous figures of the deity that are at present worshipped in the pagodas of India, they have imagined that they can clearly trace the hieroglyphic representations of the gods of Egypt. But the reverse of this is most likely to be the truth. The genius of the Hindoos was too proud and original to borrow either ceremonies of religion, or maxims of policy, from their neighbors.

The Egyptians have, more probably, appropriated to themselves the ancient mythological rites and symbols of India.

In spite of the extravagance of their chronology, it seems incontestable that the Hindoos are the most ancient people now existing on the earth. The contempt with which historians treat the historical fables of early society has been indulged with more caution in explaining the ancient condition of Hindostan. A boastful and swelling vanity commonly distinguishes the Oriental nations; and they have, for the most part, carried their claims to antiquity to an extravagant height. We are informed, in a Chaldaic fragment, that there were written accounts preserved at Babylon with the greatest care, comprehending a term of fifteen myriads of years. The love of the marvellous is curiously illustrated by the respect which has been paid to the chronology of the Hindoos, in Europe. We received the accounts of these antiquities, not from the historians of Greece and Rome, but from men who had seen the people, and whose imaginations had been powerfully affected by the spectacle of a new system of manners, arts, institutions, and ideas. These naturally expected to augment the opinion of their own consequence, by the greatness of the wonders which they had the good fortune to discover, and whose astonishment, admiration, and enthusiasm, for a time, successfully propagated themselves. The Hindoo statements, if they have not, perhaps, in any instance gained a literal belief, have almost universally been regarded as very different from the fictions of an unimproved and credulous people, and entitled to a very serious and profound investigation.

Yet these computations are carried to the highest pitch of extravagance. The present age of the world, according to the system of the Hindoos, is distinguished into four grand periods, denominated *yugs*. Of these periods, which are all of immense extent, the first three are expired; the fourth has commenced, and will not be completed till 427,062 years from the present year, 1844. From the beginning of the first yug to 1844, are reckoned 3,892,938 years. It is remarkable that the four ages of the Mexicans bear a striking resemblance to those of the Hindoos. The creation of Swayambuva, the Hindoo Adam, is thus described in the Puranas: "Of all objects in the created world, water existed first; when as yet there was neither *devatah*, nor man, nor vegetable, nor star, nor other heavenly body. The whole universe was dark, and water. In this primeval water did Bhagavat, or God, in a masculine form, repose for the space of one calpa, (a thousand ages;) after which the intention of creating other beings, for his own wise purposes, became predominant in the mind of the great Creator. First, by his sovereign will, was produced one flower of the lotos; afterwards, by the same will, was brought to light the form of Brahma from the flower. Brahma, emerging from the cup of the lotos, looked round on all the four sides, and beheld, with the eyes of his four heads, an immeasurable expanse of water. Observing the whole world thus involved in darkness, and submerged in water, he was struck with amazement, and began to consider within himself, 'Who is it that produced me? whence came I? and where am I?'

"He passed the space of a hundred years in this

perplexity within the flower of the lotos; but even this long contemplation did not enlighten his understanding, so that he remained absorbed in wonder and profound affliction. In this anxious situation, a voice from a secret quarter reached his ear, saying, 'Brahma, address the Supreme Bhagavat in prayer.' At that instant, he placed himself in a contemplative posture on the flower, and remained in deep meditation upon the power and attributes of the Almighty. In that state of contemplation, he beheld Bhagavat in a masculine form, with a thousand heads, and began to praise and glorify him. Bhagavat, propitiated and rendered merciful by his prayers and praises, opened upon him the whole spectacle of his form and being: in that being he beheld the whole of the infinite varieties of the visible world, as it were, locked in a profound sleep. The Omnipotent then ordered Brahma, saying, 'Return to thy posture of contemplation, perform austerities, and at the close of thy devotions, having obtained knowledge of the Omniscient and his complete power, thou shalt renovate the world in its original fashion.'

"Brahma, having worshipped for another hundred years, produced the elementary principles of all things, and the genii which preside over them and dwell within them; and, on a sudden, by the omnipotence of God, there was produced, from his right side, Swayambuva Menu, a man of perfect beauty, and from his left side, a woman, named Satarapa."

Such is a specimen of the sacred history of the Hindoos. But, amid all the extravagance of their mythology, a ray of truth occasionally breaks forth,

and nowhere more clearly than in their stories of the creation. If their accounts of that event vary, it should be remembered that they believe in a succession of creations, and therefore the chimeras of imagination have been blended with their traditional narratives. But the primordial water, the chaos, and the darkness, of the Mosaic account, are never forgotten. The Indian Eden is the venerated city of Allahabad, situated at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, in a delicious climate, where, for forty miles round, the territory is, to this day, held so sacred, that every man who dies there is supposed to ascend immediately to heaven. This honor, however, is disputed, by some Brahmins, in favor of Benares, not far distant.

Still, the general wildness and inconsistency of the Hindoo statements evidently place them beyond the limits of sober truth and history. Yet it has been imagined, if their literal acceptation must of necessity be renounced, that they, at least, contain a poetical or figurative delineation of real events, which ought to be studied for the truths which it may disclose. The labor and ingenuity which have been bestowed upon this inquiry, unfortunately, have not been rewarded by any adequate result. No suppositions, however gratuitous, have sufficed to establish a consistent theory; every explanation has failed; and the Hindoo legends still present a maze of unnatural fictions, in which a series of real events can by no artifice be traced. The people of Hindostan and the ancient nations of Europe came in contact at a single point; the expedition of Alexander the Great began, and, in some sort, ended, that connection. Even of this event, so com-

paratively recent and remarkable, the Hindoos have no record; they have not even a tradition that can, with any certainty, be traced to it. From the scattered hints contained in the writings of the Greeks, the conclusion has been drawn that the Hindoos, at the time of Alexander's invasion, were in a state of manners, society, and knowledge, exactly similar to that in which they were discovered by modern Europeans.

Nowhere among mankind have the laws been more exclusively referred to the Divinity than by those who instituted the theocracy of Hindostan. The plan of society and government; the rights of persons and things; even the customs, arrangement, and manners, of private and domestic life, — every thing, in short, — is established by divine prescription. The first legislator of the Hindoos, whose name it is impossible to trace, appears to have represented himself as announcing the will of God. He informed his countrymen that, at the beginning of the world, the Creator revealed the duties of man in four sacred books, entitled *Vedas;* that, during the first age, of immense duration, mankind obeyed them, and were happy; that, during the second and third, they only partially obeyed, and their happiness was proportionally diminished; that, since the commencement of the fourth age, disobedience and misery had completely prevailed, till the Vedas were forgotten and lost; but that now he was commissioned to reveal them anew to his countrymen, and to claim their obedience.

The first feature which strikes us, in the organization of society among the Hindoos, is the division of the people into four classes, or castes — the *sacerdotal*,

the *military*, the *industrious*, and the *servile*. In this institution, we are struck with the prodigious elevation and sanctity of the first caste, that of the *Brahmins*, and the studied degradation of the fourth, or the *Sudras*.

A Brahmin is theoretically regarded as the chief of all created things; the world, and all in it, are his; through him other mortals enjoy life; by his imprecations he could destroy a king, with his troops, elephants, horses, and chariots; he could frame other worlds, and regents of worlds, and could give being to new gods and new mortals. A Brahmin is to be treated with more respect than a king; his life and person are protected by the severest laws in the world; he is exempt from capital punishment, even for the most enormous crimes. Yet it should seem, at first sight, as if the Brahmins, content with gratifying their spiritual pride, had no design to profit by worldly wealth or power; the life prescribed to them is one of laborious study, as well as of austerity and retirement.

The military class, though far from being placed on an equality with the Brahmins, is still treated with honor. The rank of the industrious class is not high; their office is to keep herds of cattle, cultivate the land, carry on trade, and lend money at interest. The Sudras have none beneath them; their lot is to serve the other classes, and be kept in profound ignorance. The religious penance for killing one of this slavish rank is the same as for killing a cat, a dog, a frog, or a lizard.

Though the line of separation between the different classes was originally very strongly marked, the means

employed to prevent their mixture do not seem to have been so much attended to as in after times. No marriage is permitted between a man of an inferior and a woman of superior caste, but the converse is allowed. An individual loses his caste by eating with an inferior. Loss of caste is civil death, and the loser is excluded from the privileges of a citizen, and from all the intercourse of private life; but, unless the caste be lost for an enormous offence, or for long-continued breach of rules, it can always be regained by expiation. The Sudras, once very numerous, are now become nearly extinct.

Of the host of Hindoo divinities, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, are the most exalted. Other nations have generally bestowed upon one deity all power in heaven and earth; but the Hindoos have divided the creation and government of the universe among these three, denominating Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. The frequent incarnations of these deities form another characteristic feature of the Hindoo mythology. "I have passed," says the preserving god, "many births. Although I am not in my nature subject to birth or decay, and am the lord of all created beings, yet, having command over my own nature, I am made evident by my own power; and as often as there is a decline of virtue, and an insurrection of vice and injustice, in the world, I make myself evident; and thus I appear, from age to age, for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of virtue." Of these incarnations, known among the Hindoos by the name of *avatars*, ten are peculiarly distinguished. We shall

present a short description of the third avatar, as a specimen of the wild extravagance characteristic of the Hindoo mythology. — The soors, a species of angels, and all the glorious host of heaven, sat on the summit of Mount Meru, a fictitious mountain, highly celebrated in the books of the Hindoos, meditating the discovery of the amreeta, or water of immortality, when Vishnu said to Brahma, "Let the ocean, as a pot of milk, be churned up by the united labors of the soors and asoors; and when the mighty waters have been stirred up, the amreeta shall be found." A great mountain named Mandar was the instrument with which the operation was to be performed; but the spirits being unable to remove it, they had recourse to Vishnu and Brahma. By their direction, the king of the serpents lifted up that sovereign of mountains, with all its forests and inhabitants; and, permission having been obtained of the king of the tortoises, it was placed on his back, in the midst of the ocean. Then the soors and asoors, using the serpent Vasookee for the rope, began to churn the ocean, while there issued from the mouth of the serpent a continued stream of fire, smoke, and wind; and the roaring of the ocean, violently agitated with the whirling of the mountain, was like the thundering of a mighty cloud. Meanwhile, a violent conflagration was raised on the mountain, and quenched by a shower which the lord of the firmament poured down; when a stream, compounded of the juices of various trees and plants, ran down into the briny flood. It was from this milk-like stream, and a mixture of melted gold, that the soors obtained their immortality. The waters of the ocean, being now assim-

ilated to those juices, were converted into milk, and a species of butter was produced. By stirring up this butter of the ocean, there arose from it, first, the moon; next, Sree, the goddess of fortune; then, the goddess of wine, and the white horse Oochisrava; afterwards, the jewel Kowstoobh, the tree of plenty, and the cow that granted every heart's desire. Then the spirit Dhanwantaree, in human shape, came forth, holding in his hand a white vessel filled with the immortal juice amreeta. After the performance of other prodigies, the mountain Mandar was carried back to its former station, the soors guarded the amreeta with great care, and the god of the firmament, with all his immortal bands, gave the water of life to Vishnu, to keep it for their use.

These wild mythological fictions have stamped their own character upon the literature of the Hindoos. The same principles which condemned these people to perpetual barbarism in the fine arts, at least, those of sculpture and painting, predominated in their poetry. Their religion never advanced beyond the rude and cumbrous symbolic forms in which it represented the power and attributes of its deities. In Greece, all was humanized; the god was cast in the most perfect mould of human strength or beauty, and bore the shape and lineaments of man, distinct and definite. In India, on the contrary, we behold only the vast allegoric image which represents majesty by enormous stature, strength by multitudinous arms, wisdom by the trunk of the elephant, providence by innumerable eyes, and ubiquity by innumerable bodies. While the Greek delighted in approximating his divinity to the human

being, and so placing it, as it were, within the comprehension of human sense, the Hindoo seemed inspired with a sacred horror of bringing the actions of his deities within the range of human credibility. Even in the more human incarnations of the deity, those of Rama and Krishnu, in which he approached to the Bacchus and Apollo of Greece, he still kept far aloof from the truth and reality of life. Hence, in Indian mythological poetry, the sublime is the vast, monstrous, and incalculable. Time is measured by millions of ages; space by myriads of leagues; and the same poets who are so true in their delineations of pure human nature, and sometimes so agreeably fanciful in their pictures of the next region to earth, and of the intermediate race, the nymphs and genii, when they soar still higher are lost in extravagance, and appear as if their fictions scorned the least approximation to truth.

External nature must exercise a great influence on the minds of poets; they are insensibly impregnated with the local character of the regions in which they live. In India, almost every thing is vast and exuberant — the rivers, the plains, the forests, the trees, the whole vegetation. It is here, — amid mountains the highest in the world, crowned with eternal snows, girt with innumerable forests, and with the richest luxuriance of vegetation at their feet; amid the fabled Imaus of the ancients, the mighty chain of the Himmaleh, from which almost all the great rivers of the old world pour down, — Hindoo poetry had placed its Olympus; and, if born in such regions, can we wonder that it has given unbounded scope to the imagination, and dwelt upon

themes vast, vague, shadowy, and allegorical? We shall select, as a specimen of the mythological portion of the Hindoo poetry, the descent of the Ganges from heaven. It is part of a story to the following purport: King Sagara, the father of sixty thousand sons, is preparing to offer the Aswameda, the famous sacrifice of the horse. The holy and untouched steed is led forth among the admiring multitude, when suddenly a monstrous serpent arises from the earth, and drags it into the abyss. Sagara, in wrath, commands his sixty thousand sons to undertake the recovery of the steed. Having searched long in vain, they begin to dig into the bowels of the earth.

"Cloven with shovel and with hoe,
Pierced by axes and by spades,
Shrieked the earth in frantic woe:
Rose from out the yawning shades
Yells of anguish, hideous roars,
From th' expiring brood of hell,
Serpents, giants, and asoors,
In the deep abyss that dwell.
Sixty thousand leagues in length,
All unweary, full of wrath,
Through the centre, in their strength,
Clove they down their hellward path.
And downward dug they many a rood,
And downward, till they saw, aghast,
Where the earth-bearing elephant stood,
Even like a mountain, tall and vast.
'Tis he whose head aloft sustains
The broad earth's forest — clothed round
With all its vast and spreading plains,
And many a stately city crowned.
If underneath the o'erbearing load
Bows down his weary head, 'tis then

The mighty earthquakes are abroad,
And shaking down the abodes of men.
Around earth's pillar moved they slowly,
And there, in humble accents, blest
Him, the lofty and the holy,
That bears the region of the East.
And southward dug they, many a rood,
Until, before their shuddering sight,
The next earth-bearing elephant stood,
Huge Mahapadma's mountain height.
Upon his head, earth's southern bound,
All full of wonder, saw they rest:
Slow and awe-struck paced they round,
And him, earth's southern pillar, blest.
Westward then their work they urge,
King Sagara's six-myriad race,
Unto the vast earth's western verge,
And there, in his appointed place,
The next earth-bearing elephant stood,
Huge Sanmanasa's mountain crest:
Around they paced, in humble mood,
And in like courteous phrase addressed;
And still their weary toil endure,
And onward dig, until they see
Last earth-bearing Himapandure
Glorying in his majesty."

At length they reach the place where Vishnu, who had stolen the horse, appears, with the animal feeding near him: a flame issues forth from the indignant deity, and the sixty thousand sons of Sagara become a heap of ashes. The adventure then devolves on the youthful Anzuman, who brings it to an end with perfect success. Vishnu permits him to lead away the steed; but the ashes of his brethren cannot be purified by earthly water; the goddess Ganga must first be brought to earth, and, after the race of Sagara have

undergone lustration from that holy flood, they are enabled to ascend to heaven. Brahma, after a long delay, grants his permission.

"And 'Descend!' was given the word
To the heaven-meandering water;
Full of wrath the mandate heard
Himavan's majestic daughter.
To a giant's stature soaring,
And intolerable speed,
From heaven's height down rushed she, pouring
Upon Siva's sacred head;
Him the goddess thought, in scorn,
With her resistless might to sweep,
By her fierce waves overborne,
Down to hell's remotest deep.
Up the Rajah at the sign,
On his glittering chariot leaps:
Instant Ganga the divine
Follows his majestic steps.
From the high heaven bursts she forth,
First on Siva's lofty crown;
Headlong then, and prone to earth,
Thundering rushed the cataract down.
Swarms of bright-hued fish came dashing;
Turtles, dolphins, in their mirth,
Fallen or falling, glancing, flashing,
To the many-gleaming earth.
And all the host of heaven came down,
Spirits and genii, in amaze,
And each forsook his heavenly throne,
Upon that glorious scene to gaze!
On cars, like high-towered cities, seen
With elephants and coursers, rode,
Or on soft-swinging palanquin
Lay wondering, each observant god.
As met in bright divan each god,
And flashed their jewelled vestures' rays,

The coruscating ether glowed
As with a hundred suns ablaze.
And with the fish and dolphins gleaming,
And scaly crocodiles and snakes,
Glanced the whole air, as when fast streaming
The blue lightning shoots and breaks.
And in ten thousand sparkles bright
Went flashing up the cloudy spray,
The snowy flocking swans, less white,
Within its glittering mists at play.
And headlong now poured down the flood,
And now in silver circlets wound,
Then lake-like spread all bright and broad,
Then gently, gently flowed around!"

The political history of Hindostan may be divided into three periods — the ante-Mahometan period, the Mahometan period, and the period of British conquests. According to Hindoo tradition, two empires existed in the most ancient times; but the history of this period is so obscure that we cannot speak of any events with much certainty, except the invasion of Alexander the Great. The Mahometan conqueror of India was Mahmoud of Ghizni, whose life will be given in another chapter. In the thirteenth century, the dominion passed into the hands of the Afghans. The Tartar sultan Babex, a descendant of Tamerlane, after conquering Samarcand Bokhara, and Cabul, crossed the Indus, defeated the Afghan sovereign, extended his conquests to the Ganges, and established the Tartar dynasty over those vast regions, in the early part of the sixteenth century. As he had many Mongols in his service, this dynasty became known in Europe by the name of *the Mogul empire.* This empire attained

its meridian splendor under Aurungzebe; but after his reign it became weakened by intestine commotions and foreign invasion. In process of time, the Mogul empire became merely nominal, and the emperors were regarded as of no political consequence, otherwise than as their names and persons were made use of by different parties to forward their own views. Early in the last century, the Moguls lost all real dominion in Hindostan. The British had introduced themselves into the country, and made continual encroachments. The northern provinces were seized upon by the Afghans and the Sikhs; the sanguinary invasion of Nadir Shah, which will be related in another portion of our work, tended still further to weaken the empire. The nominal sovereignty finally devolved upon Shah Allum II., who, after numerous vicissitudes, died a pensioner of England, in the year 1806. With him the Mogul empire may be considered as having terminated, and the British East India Company, after half a century of wars and conquests, succeeded to its splendid inheritance. In another section we shall return to this latter portion of the history of Hindostan.

PERSIA.

Ancient Persia was among the great empires that figure in the early history of mankind. The first inhabitants were said to have been the descendants of Elam, the eldest son of Shem, and hence were called Elamites. Little is known of their history till the conqueror Cyrus ascended the throne, about the year

559 B. C. He extended his empire on all sides, subduing Media, Parthia, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine, and parts of Arabia, thus laying the foundation of the great empire which continued till the time of Alexander One of his most celebrated exploits was the capture of Babylon, of which we have already given an account. It was during his reign that the Jews, who had been carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, were permitted to return.*

When Babylon was taken, Belshazzar was king of Assyria. At the moment the city was on the eve of being taken, he, with his guards and the principal in-

* The captivities of Judah are generally reckoned four in number; the first under King Jehoiakim, B. C. 606, when Daniel and others were taken to Babylon; the second, three years after, when Nebuchadnezzar carried 3023 Jews to Babylon; the third, in the year 601 B. C.; and the fourth, in 588 B. C., from which period begins the captivity of seventy years, foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. The Jews were removed to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, with other people whom he had conquered, with the design of rendering that city the great metropolis of the East. In Babylon, the Jews had judges and elders, who governed them according to their peculiar laws. In the first years of his reign at Babylon, 547 B. C., Cyrus permitted the Jews to return to their country; but they did not obtain leave to rebuild the temple till 518 B. C., when Darius Hystaspes, by an edict, allowed them to enter upon that work. This is considered as terminating the seventy years' captivity, above mentioned.

It appears that the whole Jewish nation did not return to Jerusalem, but that many continued in and near Babylon, where they became very numerous. It would appear, also, that Nebuchadnezzar carried away only the principal inhabitants, as the warriors and artisans, leaving the great mass of the people behind.

habitants of the city, was revelling in festivity. The king was surprised in the royal palace, and his own blood, with that of his nobles, was mingled with the wine of the festival. Thus was fulfilled, the very night that succeeded its annunciation, that memorable prophecy of Daniel, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin!* Cyrus died in 529 B. C., and was succeeded by his son Cambyses. This prince appears to have had his father's ambition for conquest, with vices which rendered him a scourge to his country and his age. Being addicted to wine, he was warned by one of his favorites, Prexaspes, against the practice. Upon this, the monarch drank off several goblets, saying, "We will now see whether the wine has dimmed my sight, or rendered my hand unsteady." He then called for a bow and arrow, and ordered the son of Prexaspes to stand at the other end of the hall. The child did so, and Cambyses, in the presence of his father, shot an arrow directly through his heart.

The principal event in the career of Cambyses was the conquest of Egypt, a country then containing many millions of inhabitants, and the most splendid cities in the world. The Persian monarch was able to bring against them an immense army; but, according to the legends of antiquity, he succeeded rather by stratagem than force. Knowing the stupid reverence of the Egyptians for cats and dogs, he placed an immense number of these animals in front of his troops, and thus advanced upon the enemy. The latter, fearing to injure the objects of their reverence, stood aloof, and the Persians entered their cities without resistance.

Among other places captured by Cambyses was

Memphis, one of the most magnificent cities of antiquity, and the ruins of which still excite the wonder of travellers. On his entrance into this place, the conqueror noticed that the Egyptians were engaged in the celebration of a feast of their god Apis. Believing that they were mocking him, he caused the Holy Bull to be brought before him, slew him with his own sword, and ordered the priest to be scourged with rods. Giving himself up to intoxication, which seems to have driven him mad, he now committed the most horrible outrages. He caused his brother, Smerdis, to be murdered, and killed his wife, Atossa, with a blow of his foot. He soon after died of a wound inflicted by his own sword, as he was mounting his horse.

The history of Persia, from this period, seems a gorgeous and bewildering dream. Its extent, from east to west, was nearly three thousand miles, and spread at once over the most fertile and populous portion of the globe. Sovereign succeeded sovereign in rapid succession, each being marked with the desire of conquest, and exercising the most despotic sway over many nations, and an almost incredible population. In the life of Alexander, we have given a sketch of the state of the country in his time, and of the events which attended its conquest by the Macedonian leader. After his death, it was governed for a time by his successors, the Seleucides; but it was added to the kingdom of Parthia in 246 B. C., in which it continued till A. D. 229. From this period, the modern kingdom of Persia was gradually formed, and consolidated into a powerful state.

The commencement of the Parthian dominion may be considered as closing the history of ancient Persia, a subject which occupies so prominent a place in the early records of mankind. Though Babylon was its capital, Persepolis — which, at some early period, was doubtless the residence of the kings — afterwards became the receptacle of the royal dead, and the sanctuary of the people. Immediately after their accession to the throne, the Persian kings proceeded to this city, to be invested with the garment of Cyrus; and at certain periods resorted to it as a holy place, to offer up sacrifices, according to the Magian rites, which was the religion of the country. In the time of Alexander, this was a splendid city, but the conqueror displayed his irritation in causing it to be demolished. Its stately ruins still attest its ancient magnificence, and bear witness to the barbarism of the destroyer.

The chief remains of Persepolis consist of unfinished tombs, some of which strike the beholder with wonder and awe. One of these is described as the wreck of a magnificent structure, encircled in the rear by rocky mountains. It is in the form of a crescent, and consists of three divisions, one above the other, built of immense blocks of beautiful gray marble, joined with admirable art, and without mortar. Marble stairs, so wide and easy of ascent that ten horsemen can ride up them abreast, lead from the lower divisions to the higher. At the entrance of the portico, to which the steps belonging to the first division lead, fabulous animals are seen wrought in the still remaining pilasters, as if to guard the palace. Similar steps lead to

the second division, to a colonnade, several columns of which still exist, fifty feet high, and of such a circumference that three men can scarcely clasp them.

This colonnade leads to several detached buildings, of which the largest stands in the same division; the others, farther back, form the third division. These houses contain a number of chambers, of different sizes, and seem to have been real dwellings. They are ornamented with a number of images, representing processions, people of all ranks, combats of fabulous animals with one another and with men. In the wall of the rock, against which the building stands, are two large tombs. At a considerable height from the ground, a *façade* is hewn in the rock itself, behind which is a chamber that can be entered only by a passage broken through, as no regular entrance has been found. Beneath, the rock is cut perpendicularly, in order to make the monument entirely inaccessible.

Beside these remains, which bear a great resemblance to the gigantic architectural ruins of Egypt, there are others, consisting of vestiges of temples and other edifices, all indicating vastness of design and great labor in the execution; yet, on the whole, exhibiting a state of the arts inferior both to Egypt and Greece, in their best days.

The present kingdom of Persia, which is called Iran by the inhabitants, is far less extensive than the ancient empire. It consists of an elevated table-land, surrounded by mountains. It extends from the Caspian Sea, on the north, to the Persian Gulf, on the south: on the east it is bounded by Beloochistan and Affghanistan, and on the west by the Turkish dominions. It

probably contains ten millions of inhabitants, who are of different tribes and modes of life, some being of nomadic habits, and others living in settled abodes. They generally profess the Mahometan faith.

Among the several nations of Persia are the Parsees, who still adhere to the religion of Zoroaster, as contained in the Zend Avesta. They adore fire as the symbol of the divinity, and are distinguished by the purity of their lives, and their honesty in all transactions, which are chiefly confined to agriculture and the raising of fruits.

The Persians of the present day are distinguished for their polite manners and mental cultivation. They boast of many great writers, of whom the poet Firdusi was the earliest, and sustains the highest rank. Their literature abounds in prose fables and moral tales, chiefly derived from India. In history, geography and ethics, theology and jurisprudence, their works are numerous, and some of them possess great merit.

FIRDUSI.

The first of Persian poets, both in age and rank, is Firdusi. He flourished at a time when the purity of the language had only begun to be contaminated by the Arab conquerors; and he made it his pride and boast to exclude from his great work, Shah Nameh, or Book of Kings, every possible trace of the subjection of his country. His style is simple, and its antiquity is testified by the absence of that profusion of ornament which the fancy and learning of the Persians have since heaped upon their national literature. In these respects, he resembles Homer, with whom he is generally, and with great justice, compared. Each wrote on the heroic age of his country, and each possessed the art, by the alternate pictures of battle and banquet, by mixing dramatic scenes with narrative, and by the occasional introduction of episode, to diversify and embellish the annals of war. But with this similarity, there is all the difference that dissimilarity of country and climate could create; and while we find Homer distinguished for the exquisite correctness of his judgment, in Ferdusi we are continually called upon to regret that imperfect taste which prevents him from rising to the rank which he might otherwise have attained.

It may, however, be truly said of these two great men, that they are the only original writers of heroic poetry that the world has produced. The epic poems of Europe have all been formed on the model of Homer, and by the rules that have been drawn from his example. In Persia, none has gone beyond Firdusi; and, with all his faults, he must be allowed to have employed with great discretion the marvels which the fabulous history of his country supplied.

Abul Cassem Firdusi was a native of Tous, in the province of Khorassan, and was born in the year 915. At the time of his birth, his father saw the child in a dream, standing with his face towards the west, and uttering a loud voice which was echoed from every quarter. When he awoke, he applied to a famous interpreter for the explanation of his vision, and was informed that the fame of his son, and his poetical talents, would be the theme of the universe. Such is the tale of his biographers, invented, probably, from a sense of poetical justice, which required that so eminent a character should be ushered into the world with some presage of his future greatness.

While a boy, his desire of knowledge, and his application to study, were ardent; and his turn of mind, even at that time, inclined him to give particular attention to the ancient history of Persia, a taste that afterwards led him to the accomplishment of his celebrated poem. The court of Sultan Mahmoud, of Ghizni, was the seat of the Muses. He was one of the most accomplished sovereigns that ever sat on an Asiatic throne; and his own taste prompted him to grant a liberal patronage to men of literature. Poetry and history were his favorite

studies; and it was, perhaps, his desire of seeing both combined in one immortal work, that led him to suggest the undertaking which Firdusi executed. His library was furnished with the most authentic annals of the Persian empire, and among them was a complete history compiled in the reign and by the order of Yezdejerd, the last of the Sassanian dynasty, by the most judicious historians in Persia.

This precious manuscript narrowly escaped destruction, when, after the conquest of the kingdom, it was presented, as a valuable part of the plunder, to the Caliph Omar, who enjoys the ill fame of having burnt the Alexandrian library. He ordered a translation to be made into the Arabic; and, when his commands were obeyed, severely criticised the book for treating of those worldly affairs that were forbidden by the prophet. Happily, he did not proceed to wreak his vengeance upon it, but left it to take its chance among the spoil, and it fell into the hands of a private soldier. Its history for some centuries is obscure, but at length it came into the possession of Mahmoud, who rewarded magnificently the refugee that presented it to him. It seems that the sultan, in the midst of his literary treasures, and the poet at his private studies, had, unknown to each other, conceived the design of a mighty work on the history of Persia under its ancient kings, but each was deficient in that which was possessed by the other. Mahmoud had in abundance the materials, but no hand able to rear the structure; while the poet, conscious of his ability to perform the task which he had planned, was deterred from the attempt by the scantiness of his stores. At length, he

made a trial of his strength in a preliminary essay, which gained him such notice, that he was invited to the court of the sultan.

We are told that, in a dream, the imagination of Firdusi had pictured to him a young monarch seated on a throne, illuminating the universe, and particularly smiling on himself. Anxious at his approaching competition with all the poets that thronged the royal presence, but encouraged by his friends, and especially by his dream, which, in that age and country, it would have been deemed madness to disregard, the poet at length obeyed the repeated summons. He was well received, and even gained the victory over three of the royal poets, who, being jealous of their rival, had resolved to exclude him from their society. The dream was verified, and the triumph of Firdusi was complete. When he presented a part of his poem to the sultan, Mahmoud, in the presence of the whole court, said to him, "It is you who have shed lustre on the court of Ghizni." The royal bards themselves confessed that he was the only man capable of writing the projected Shah Nameh, and this favorite scheme he was accordingly directed to undertake. He was promised a golden dinar for every line — a sufficient sum to have satisfied the most successful poet of our own times. To gratify his thirst for fame, which was much more ardent than his desire for wealth, he was honored with the united praise of all who hoped for favor in the eyes of their sovereign, and by eulogies and invitations from all the surrounding courts. The intrigues of his secret enemies — for none dared openly avow himself as such — had no effect against him during

the long period of time which he devoted to the composition of his great work, which was not brought to a close till the poet's seventieth year. In its finished state, he presented it to the monarch, who, delighted at the successful accomplishment of a design which he had so much at heart, immediately ordered the payment of a hundred and twenty thousand dinars, being the number of lines which the poem contained.

But Firdusi was doomed to experience the lot of most of those who put their trust in princes. The machinations of his enemies were at length successful. The vizier, who was charged with the execution of this order, sent silver dirhems instead of golden dinars; which act seems to have been designed to rouse the indignation of the poet, in the hope that advantage might be taken of his indiscretion, and the royal favor be withdrawn from him. The plot succeeded, for the messenger despatched with the money reported, on his return, that he had found Firdusi in the bath, and that, in resentment for the insult which he supposed the sultan had offered him, he had given all the money away, exclaiming, "I wrote not for such pay as this, but for immortal fame," adding, "The sultan shall know that I did not bestow the labor of thirty years upon a poem to be rewarded with dirhems!" The consequences were such as the enemies of Firdusi had desired; they succeeded in persuading Mahmoud that such an insult to his majesty ought not to be forgiven; and the immortal poet of Persia was sentenced to be trodden to death by an elephant. Great exertions, however, were made by his friends to save him, and, with much difficulty, they obtained a revocation of his sentence.

After these events, Ghizni was neither an agreeable nor a safe residence for the poet. He left the city, having composed a bitter satire on Mahmoud, which he gave to one of the courtiers, telling him that it was a panegyric on the sultan, which he must not present to his master till several days had elapsed.

The remainder of his life was spent in wandering from one kingdom to another, pursued by the emissaries of Mahmoud, whose power was too much dreaded by the various monarchs of the East to allow them to harbor, for any length of time, the proscribed poet. At Bagdad, he was hospitably received by the Caliph Kadir Billah, who gave him the 60,000 pieces of gold which was the amount due from Mahmoud. Here he composed a poem entitled *Joseph*. The vengeance of Mahmoud drove him from this asylum, and he wandered about in divers quarters, till the intercession of his friends procured his pardon, and he returned to his native town, where he died in 1003, in the 89th year of his age. It is said that the sultan repented of his persecution of the poet, and sent him the 60,000 dinars; but, as the messenger approached his house, he was met by the hearse which was conveying the body of Firdusi to the tomb.

"The work of Firdusi," says Sir William Jones, "remains entire, a glorious monument of Eastern genius and learning, which, if it ever should be generally understood in its original language, will contest the merit of invention with Homer himself, whatever may be thought of its subject or the arrangement of its incidents. Both sought their images in Nature herself, and did not catch them by reflection, by painting, like modern poets, the likeness of a likeness; and

each possessed, in the highest degree, that fruitful invention, that creative genius, which is the soul of poetry." The Shah Nameh, which means the "Book of Kings," contains the substance of the whole history of Persia, from the remotest ages down to what were modern times in the age of the poet. Considered as a whole, it is certainly liable to the same objections as are made to the Pharsalia and the Araucania, which are not so much epic as historical poems. Firdusi's work, which comprises three thousand seven hundred years within the limits of its action, violates the unity of time to an unparalleled extent. Many portions, however, might be separated from the rest, and would suffer no injury by the excision, but would, in almost every particular, conform to the rules of heroic poetry. As to the general merits of the work, we are justified in saying that, since an epic poem is the highest reach of the poet's art, Firdusi is indisputably entitled to take his station in this first order of the sons of song.

The wars between Iran and Touran, or Persia and Tartary, are comprised in a portion which has been pointed out by Sir William Jones as constituting a poem truly epic in the unity of its action. Its subject is the overthrow and death of Afrasiab, king of Tartary, who claimed, by force of arms, the throne of Persia, as the descendant of one of the former race of monarchs. He was assisted in the invasion by the Chinese and Indian emperors; and, for the machinery of the poem, the demons, giants, and enchanters of Asia appear in subordinate characters in those scenes which they had been before permitted, with less judgment, to fill as the principal actors. In this part of the Shah Nameh we first read of the deeds of Rustem, the Persian

Hercules, who placed himself at the head of his country's armies, and, after a series of exploits, the narrative of which is diversified with continual episodes, defeated the confederate monarchs, with the dragons and other monsters who assisted them as allies, and completed his triumph by the expulsion and death of Afrasiab. Were this story detached from the whole poem, it would, of itself, form a regular epic as long as the Iliad.

Firdusi's poetry, we think, will please the English reader most in the descriptive passages, from which we will select the following: —

"See where yon plain, in various colors bright,
Tempts the young hero to the foray-fight;
Where many a grove, and many a garden, grace
The wide domain of Touran's ancient race.
In waves of silk the glossy cornfields glow;
Musk scents the air, and waters roll below;
The lily droops beneath its ample flower;
The rose breathes incense through her native bower;
Proud stalks the pheasant through the leafy glade;
The dove cooes softly from the cypress shade.
Long may this earthly paradise remain
To glad our vision, long as Time shall reign.
Now up the hills, and now along the vales,
Stray the fair damsels of the Tartar dales —
Manizheh there, first daughter of the throne,
Bright as the sun, with radiance all her own;
Siàtrah here, Afrasiab's second pride,
Circled by blooming maids on every side:
O'er the bright flowers a brighter glory sheds;
The rose and lily hide their vanquished heads.
See there, the wandering nymphs among the trees,
With cypress forms, and locks that scent the breeze;
Lips bathed in wine, and eyes in balmy sleep,
And cheeks where roses endless vigils keep.

O, could we venture, for a single day,
To dare all dangers where those damsels stray,
We'd bear away some maid of peerless charms,
A glorious prize for royal Khosru's arms."

We have no reason to think that Ariosto ever read Firdusi: yet these two poets strongly resemble each other in style, so far as two different idioms can approximate in character. This similarity is most remarkable in the romantic and solitary adventures of the knights and heroes of the Shah Nameh and the Orlando Furioso, and in the perilous expeditions in which they engage, in pursuit of the fair dames of the enemy's camp. The terrestrial paradise of the Italian poet has all the warmth of coloring of the most highly-wrought descriptions of the Persian bard.

Firdusi gloried in being a Mahometan; yet the religion of his poem is that of the fire-worshippers and followers of Zoroaster, which was the faith of the Persians at the period of the Arab invasion. There is a simplicity and sublimity about it which make it peculiarly suitable to poetry; and, though it can form no part of what is called the machinery of an epic poem, yet there is a wild grandeur in the adoration of God in his glorious emblem, the rising sun, the dispenser of light and life, as consonant to the majesty of Firdusi's vast subject as it is to the fine climate and beautiful country where it was adopted. The Mussulman bigots cursed the Persian idolaters; but Firdusi saw the advantage of introducing into his work the genuine religion of his forefathers, which was still secretly cherished by many of his contemporaries, and was sufficiently obsolete to create a romantic interest in its

former flourishing state. He describes the arrival of Zoroaster at the court of the Persian king, and the favor which his religion found in that monarch's eyes, under the metaphor of the rapid growth of a vast tree before the royal palace.

"As years on years successive roll away,
A mighty tree springs up to meet the day;
In the king's court it rears its stately head;
Deep is its root, and wide its branches spread.
Wisdom from every leaf its balm distils,—
That balm, the healer of all human ills.
'Tis Zeradusht, the sage; he comes to quell,
With steps auspicious, all the powers of hell;
From Ahriman to wrest his iron rod,
And win the world's dominion back to God.
—'I come, O King, a legate from the sky,
To point the road that leads to God most high.
Thus saith the Lord, "My prophet's word obey;
View all my works in heaven and earth, and say
Whose hand could work such wonders; or whose word
But mine, who reign the all-creating Lord."'"

As a comparison with some of the Homeric contests, we will offer to the reader an extract describing the death of Sohrab, and his recognition of his father. In the first encounter, Sohrab, after carefully inquiring if his antagonist were Rustem, and hearing his disavowal of that name, conquered, but spared him, on his assurance that such was the Persian custom on the first defeat. They both retired from the field, and met the next day to decide the combat.

"Again they met. A glow of youthful grace
Diffused its radiance o'er the stripling's face;
And, scoffing thus, 'Again in arms?' he cried;
'Dost thou, presumptuous, Scythian power deride?

Or dost thou, wearied, draw thy vital breath,
And seek from me the crimson shaft of death?'
Then, mild, the champion: 'Youth is proud and vain·
The idle threat a warrior would disdain;
This aged arm, perhaps, may yet control
The wanton fury that inflames thy soul.'
Again dismounting, each the other viewed
With sullen glance, and swift the fight renewed.
Clinched front to front, again they tug and bend,
Twist their broad limbs as every nerve would rend.
With rage convulsive, Rustem grasps him round,
Bends his strong back, and hurls him to the ground.
Like lightning, quick he gives the deadly thrust,
And spurns the stripling, weltering, in the dust.
'Thus, as my blood the shining steel imbrues,
Thine too shall flow; for Destiny pursues,
And when she marks the victims of her power,
A thousand daggers speed the dying hour.'
Groaning in pain, he then in murmurs sighed,
'O, had I seen what fate has now denied,
My glorious father! Life will soon be o'er,
And his great deeds enchant my soul no more.
But hope not to elude his piercing sight;
In vain for thee the deepest glooms of night.
Could'st thou through ocean's depths for refuge fly,
Or midst the star-beams track the upper sky,
His kindled rage would persecute thee there,
For Rustem's soul will burn with anguish and despair
An icy horror chills the champion's heart;
His brain whirls round with agonizing smart;
O'er his wan cheek no pearly sorrows flow;
Senseless he sinks beneath the weight of woe.
Relieved, at length, with frenzied look he cries,
'Prove thou art mine — confirm my doubting eyes,
For I am Rustem!' — Dire amazement shook
The dying youth, and mournful thus he spoke:
'How oft my heart has throbbed with strong desire,
And fondly claimed thee for my valiant sire!'"

We will offer another short extract, as an instance of that perpetual disposition to moralize which is a characteristic of the Oriental poets, and which would lead us to suppose the Eastern nations to be remarkable for their strict attention to morality, if we did not know their delinquency, in this respect, from other and more certain evidences.

"Then the fond mother, shunning light and air,
In secret wept, and tore her golden hair;
Fled the dear scenes where Sohrab's youth had passed,
The house of feasting, where he parted last;
With sable trappings hung the lofty walls;
And mourned him, day and night, within her lonely halls.
A year she mourned; then, swift as wishes spring,
Her soul, to meet her Sohrab's soul, took wing.
Reader, prepare thy soul! nor doubt this truth;
'Tis Brahma tells it; — that 'the giddy youth
Who roams to-day, with heart as light as air,
Will feel, to-morrow, all a father's care.'
Make not thy resting-place with feeble man,
Nor dare futurity's dark page to scan;
But know, whatever good or ill betides,
The rolling wheel of fate 'tis God who guides.
Fix not thy wishes on this house of clay,
But seek a mansion in eternal day.
Here cease my song! — But first the prophet's name
A thousand blessings from my voice shall claim."

ZOROASTER AND HIS DOCTRINES.

FEW individuals have been the subject of more controversy in relation to their personal history than this great chief of the Magians,* whose doctrines had so wide and permanent an influence upon the religious systems of the East. The date of his birth has been fixed at about five centuries before Christ. According to some accounts he was born in Persia, and according to others in Palestine, of Jewish parents. If he was not a native of Palestine, he appears to have passed his early youth there, and is said to have been a servant to a Jewish prophet. According to the traditions preserved among his followers, his birth was preceded by wonderful presages announcing the celebrity to which he should attain, and it was followed by amazing prodigies. The Magi, it is said, fearing that this infant would prove a severe reformer, threw him into a fire,

* The Magi, or Magians, were the caste of priests among the ancient Medians and Persians. They were in the exclusive possession of scientific knowledge; sacrifices and prayers could only be offered through them, and they were deemed the only vehicle by which the Deity communicated his will to mankind. The authority and power they possessed were almost unbounded, and these they grossly abused. Zoroaster was their great reformer, and he divided them into learners, teachers, and perfect teachers.

from which he escaped unhurt. He was then cast among ferocious wild beasts, who gazed upon him with reverence. His constitution also resisted an attempt to poison him. But it is of more importance to inquire how Zoroaster acquired that knowledge, address, and influence, which enabled him to surmount the disadvantages of an obscure condition, and to become the religious legislator of Persia.

Amidst various contradictory accounts, we shall follow those which appear to be the most reasonable. Leaving Palestine, he proceeded to Persia, where he secluded himself from society, and improved his solitude by maturing the knowledge which he had acquired, and preparing for the bold and hazardous attempt to revolutionize the religious rites and institutions of his country. The primeval religion of Persia consisted in a belief in one God; a pious fear, love, and adoration of him; a reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species; and a compassionate tenderness for the brute creation. This religion was followed by the worship of the stars; and to this succeeded the worship of fire. After twenty years' study and meditation in a desert, according to some writers, and, according to others, in a cave, Zoroaster, having matured his plan of religious reform, came forth into the world, and was introduced to the court of Darius at Persepolis. He avowed himself to be intrusted with a divine commission and the power of working miracles. The invention of magic is ascribed to him; but this was probably nothing more than the performance of certain religious ceremonies, by means of which good demons were supposed to be

prevailed upon to communicate supernatural properties and powers to herbs, stones, and other natural bodies, or to afford assistance, in other miraculous ways, to those who invoked them. In war, it was supposed that, by the help of this sort of magic, a hostile army might be routed, or struck with a general panic. In this art the kings of Chaldea and Persia were instructed, as one of the most useful instruments of government among a people whose ignorance and credulity rendered them fit subjects of imposture.

The leading religious doctrines propagated by Zoroaster were the following: God existed from all eternity, and was like infinity of time and space. There were two principles in the universe, good and evil: the one was termed Ormuzd, the presiding agent of all good; the other Ahriman, the lord of evil. Each of these had the power of creation, but this power was exercised with opposite designs; and it was from their united action that an admixture of good and evil was found in every created thing. The angels of Ormuzd, or the good principle, sought to preserve the elements, the seasons, and the human race, which the infernal agents of Ahriman sought to destroy; but the source of good alone, the great Ormuzd, was eternal, and must, therefore, ultimately prevail. Light was the type of the good, darkness of the evil, spirit; and God had said to Zoroaster, "My light is concealed under all that shines!" Hence the disciple of that prophet, when he performs his devotions in a temple, turns towards the sacred fire that burns upon its altar; and when in the open air, towards the sun, as the noblest of all lights.

Zoroaster also reformed the old religion by the addition of genii, or angels, presiding over months and days; of new ceremonies in the veneration shown to fire; and by producing a book called the Zend Avesta, which he pretended to have received from heaven. The general maxims taught in this book were moral and excellent, and well calculated to promote industry and virtue. The principal tenets of the faith which he established were pure and sublime.

Zoroaster taught that, at the final consummation of things, goodness will be triumphant over evil: Ahriman and his followers will sink into their native darkness, and virtue will maintain the universe in everlasting concord. These tenets were shadowed forth in all the obscurity of Oriental mysticism and allegory, so as to be comprehended only by the most profound students among his followers; but the simplicity of the religious rites enjoined by him was obvious to common observation. Herodotus informs us that the ancient Persians rejected the use of temples, altars, and statues; that the summits of the loftiest mountains were the places on which they offered sacrifices; and that their worship consisted in hymns and prayers, which were addressed to the Supreme God of heaven. This practice is alluded to by Lord Byron in the following lines: —

"Not vainly did the ancient Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit in whose honor shrines are weak
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,

With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer."

The Persians were also charged with worshipping the elements, and the sun and moon, the former of which was personified under the name of Mithra. But they asserted that this worship was offered only because they regarded such objects as symbols of the divine power and nature. It is nevertheless true that Zoroaster artfully adapted his creed to the prejudices of his countrymen; and his introduction of the worship of an earthly flame, as the type of the Deity, could not fail, in the end, to open a wide door to superstition.

Zoroaster was deemed a great astrologer, and, from his knowledge of the heavenly bodies, could calculate nativities and pretend to foretell events, which knowledge descended to the priesthood of his followers. The Magi, or sacerdotal order, in his religion, were very numerous, and formed a regular hierarchy; the payment of tithes for their maintenance was made a sacred duty. The language of the Zend Avesta has, from a remote age, been obsolete, and there is no question of the great antiquity of the book. Many other works, on astrology, physics, and theology, have been attributed to Zoroaster, but they are all lost. Fragments of a work, entitled "The Oracles of Zoroaster," are still extant, but they are probably from the pen of some Platonist of the second century.

THE RETREAT

OF THE

TEN THOUSAND GREEKS.

One of the most celebrated military exploits of either ancient or modern times, is the retreat of the Greeks, under Xenophon, from Persia to the Euxine Sea, an enterprise successfully accomplished in the face of the most formidable obstacles. The narrative of this event does not exhibit the horrors of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, but the pen of the Greek general himself has drawn so lively a picture of the sufferings, fortitude, and perseverance, of his men, as to render it one of the most interesting portions of ancient history.

When the younger Cyrus, of Persia, planned his undertaking for the dethronement of his brother Artaxerxes, he engaged Proxenus, a Bœotian, to enlist Greeks in his service. One of the persons thus engaged was Xenophon, who entered the army of Cyrus as a volunteer, without any special command. At Cynaxa, a day's journey from Babylon, a decisive engagement was fought, in the year 400 before Christ, between the armies of the rival brothers. Cyrus, by

his rash impetuosity, lost both the battle and his life. The Persians of his army were totally defeated: the Greeks were, however, victorious in their quarter of the field, and, after the battle, were summoned by Artaxerxes to lay down their arms. This proposal was heard with the liveliest indignation. They were surrounded by enemies; yet they rejected the summons without hesitation, being firmly resolved to fight to the last extremity rather than surrender. To add to their embarrassments, they were seduced into a deceitful armistice by the Persians, and their generals were treacherously murdered. This act of perfidy converted their previous alarm and apprehension almost into despair. They were twelve hundred miles from home, surrounded by powerful foes, and had no possibility of retreating except by crossing steep and craggy mountains, rapid rivers, and wide deserts, — thus encountering famine, hostility, and treachery, at every step. Provisions could be obtained only at the point of the sword; every country that lay in their way was hostile; and, although they might conquer one enemy, another stood ready to oppose them. They had no cavalry to chastise the clouds of barbarians who perpetually hung upon their front, flanks, and rear: under such circumstances, it would seem that victory would be fruitless, and defeat inevitable ruin.

Yet, in the face of all these terrors, the Greeks determined to make the attempt to fight their way homeward. Xenophon, in a council of war, roused the troops from the despondency which had taken possession of them, and was elected general-in-chief. The retreat was therefore commenced; but as they pro-

ceeded, constant attacks, in every quarter, made their march a continual battle. We can present only a portion of their adventures to the reader, which we shall give nearly in the words of Xenophon himself.

After innumerable skirmishes with hosts of enemies, and a fatiguing march through a desert, they came to the Euphrates, which they crossed, the water being breast-high. It was said that they were not far from the source of the river. From thence they marched three days over a plain covered with deep snow. The last day's march was very painful, for the north wind, blowing full in their faces, parched and benumbed the men. One of the priests advised them to sacrifice to the wind, which was done, and the violence of the blasts sensibly abated. The snow was a fathom in depth, so that many of the slaves and sumpter-horses died, with about thirty soldiers. They kept fires during the night, finding plenty of wood where they encamped. In the places where the fires were made, the snow being melted, there were large pits which reached down to the ground; this afforded an opportunity of measuring the depth of the snow.

From this station they marched the next day through the snow, when many of the men were seized with the *bulimia*,* and fell down exhausted. Upon the march, a party under Cheirisophus came to a village just as it was dark, and found some women and girls at a fountain without the walls, carrying water. These females inquired who they were. The interpreter answered, in Persian, that they were going to the satrap from the

* A disorder creating excessive hunger.

king. The women replied that he was not there, but at a place in the neighborhood. It being late, they entered the town with the women, and called upon the governor. Here Cheirisophus encamped with all of his men that could come up. The rest, who were unable to continue their march, passed the night without food or fire, by which some of them perished; and a party of the enemy, following them, took those of the sumpter-horses that could not keep pace with the others. Some of the men, also, who had lost their sight by the snow, or whose toes were frozen, were left behind. The eyes of the men were relieved from the snow by wearing black cloth before them, and their feet by continual motion. Their extreme sufferings caused some of the men to sit down and refuse to march any farther. Xenophon used all the means in his power to persuade them not to stay behind, telling them that the enemy were in great force close upon the rear. At last he grew angry; but they bade him kill them if he chose, for they were not able to go on. Upon this, he determined, if possible, to strike a terror into the enemy, lest they should fall upon the men who were thus unable to proceed. It was now dark, and the enemy came on with great tumult, wrangling about the booty they had taken. At this moment, such of the Greek rear-guard as were able rose up, and rushed upon them, while those who were fatigued shouted as loud as they could, and struck their shields with their pikes. The enemy, in great alarm, rushed into a valley through the snow, and were heard of no more.

Xenophon, with the rest of the forces, then retired, assuring the sick men that, the next day, some people

should be sent to them. But, before they had gone half a mile, they found others lying down in the snow, while no guard was set. They forced these men to rise, and then learned that the vanguard had halted. Xenophon, hearing this, pushed forward, sending the ablest of the targeteers before, to inquire the cause. They brought word that the whole army were taking their rest in the snow. Xenophon and his men, therefore, after setting such guard as they could, passed the night in that spot, without fire or food. Towards daybreak, he sent the youngest of his men to compel the sick to rise, and proceed on the march.

Meantime, Cheirisophus had sent a company from the village, to inquire how the rear-guard fared. These were rejoiced to see them, and, having delivered their sick to be carried to the camp, they marched forward to the village. Here Cheirisophus kept his station, and the remainder of the army took up their quarters in the villages around.

Polycrates, an Athenian, one of the captains, then took a company of the light-armed troops, and made a rapid incursion upon a neighboring village. He surprised the inhabitants, together with the governor, in their houses, and found seventeen colts, that were being bred as a tribute for the king; also the governor's daughter, who had not been married above nine days: her husband, having gone to hunt rabbits, was not taken. The houses of these people were under ground, the entrance resembling a well, but the interior was spacious. There was a passage dug for the cattle, but the inhabitants descended by ladders. In these houses were goats, sheep, cows, and fowls. All the cattle

were fed within doors. There were also wheat, barley, pulse, and jars of beer, the malt floating even with the brim of the vessels. The jars contained also reeds of various sizes, without joints. When any one was thirsty, he took one of these in his mouth and sucked. The liquor was very strong, and pleasant to those accustomed to it.

Xenophon invited the governor of the village to sup with him, and encouraged him with the assurance that his children should not be taken from him, and that, when the Greeks departed, they would leave his house full of provisions in payment for what they took, provided he would serve them, as a guide, till they came to another nation. The governor agreed to this, and, as a proof of good-will, told them where there was some wine buried in the earth. The soldiers enjoyed plenty that night, keeping an eye, however, upon the governor and his children.

The next day, Xenophon, taking the governor with him, went to Cheirisophus, visiting the villages on his way, where he found the soldiers feasting and carousing. They all forced him to sit down and feast with them, and he every where found the tables covered with lamb, kid, pork, veal, and fowls, with plenty of wheaten and barley bread. When any one wished to drink to his friend, he took him to the jar, where he was obliged to stoop and drink like an ox. When the party came to Cheirisophus, they found his men also feasting, and crowned with garlands of hay, having Armenian boys, in barbarian dresses, to wait upon them. With these boys they conversed by signs, as if they had been deaf and dumb. Cheirisophus and Xenophon asked the

governor, by their interpreter, what country this was; and he answered, Armenia.

From hence, as the army advanced, they came into the country of the Taochians, and here their provisions began to fail; for the natives inhabited fastnesses, into the recesses of which they had conveyed all their effects. The Greeks, at length, arrived at a strong post without any houses, but where great numbers of men, with their cattle, were collected. This place Cheirisophus attacked, and when one company was roughly received in the assault, another went up; for the place, being surrounded with precipices, could not be assailed in all parts at once.

When Xenophon came up with the heavy-armed rear-guard, Cheirisophus said, "You come very seasonably, for this place must be taken, or the army will be starved." Upon this a council of war was called, and Cheirisophus said, "The place is accessible only in this spot, and when any of our men attempt to go up, the enemy roll down great stones from the rock above; and behold the consequence!" — pointing to his men with broken legs and ribs. "But," replied Xenophon, "when they have expended all their stones, what can hinder us from going up? I can see only a few men with arms. The space through which we must pass, exposed to the stones, is not above a hundred and fifty feet in length, one third of which is covered with clumps of large pines, where the soldiers may be sheltered." "But while they are exposed," said Cheirisophus, "the stones will fall in a shower." "So much the better," replied Xenophon; "they will be out of ammunition the sooner. Let us try it."

Upon this, Cheirisophus and Xenophon, with Callimachus of Parrhasie, one of the captains, advanced, all the rest of the officers keeping out of danger. Then about seventy of the men crept forward, one by one, under the trees, sheltering themselves as well as they could. At a safe distance in the rear stood Agasias the Stymphalian, and Aristonymus of Methydria. Callimachus advanced two or three paces from his tree, but as soon as he saw the stones pouring down, he ran back: this he repeated several times, and on each occasion more than ten cartloads of stones were thrown at him. When Agasias saw what Callimachus was doing, and that the eyes of the whole army were upon him, he began to fear that his rival would bear away the palm of victory; so he pushed forward. Callimachus, seeing him endeavoring to pass by, laid hold of his shield; and, in the mean time, Aristonymus, and after him Eurylochus, ran by them both, for they were rivals in glory.

By this emulation, which urged the assailants to the boldest efforts, the place was taken. And now followed a dreadful spectacle; for the women in the garrison first threw their children down the precipices, and then themselves. The men did the same. Æneas, the Stymphalian, a captain, seeing one of the barbarians, richly dressed, running to throw himself down, caught hold of him, and they both fell over together, and were dashed to pieces.

The Greeks now advanced through the country of the Chalybians. These were the most courageous people they had hitherto met, and a close engagement soon followed. The enemy had long linen corselets,

with thick twisted cords instead of tassels, and their pikes were fifteen cubits long. They kept within their towns till the Greeks had passed, and then followed them with harassing attacks. The latter, however, advanced in spite of every obstacle, and soon came to the River Harpasus, which was four hundred feet broad. From thence they marched through the country of the Scythians, and in four days more, they came to a large city, well inhabited, called Gymnias.

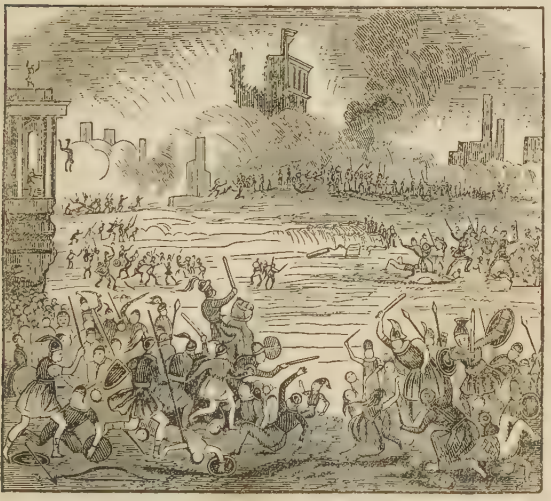
Ancient Scythians.

The governor of this country sent the Greeks a guide; this man promised, in five days, to bring them within sight of the sea; if not, he consented to be put to death. The fifth day they arrived at the holy mountain called Theches. As soon as the vanguard

ascended the mountain and saw the sea, they gave a great shout, which being heard by Xenophon, and those in the rear, they thought the front must be attacked. The noise, however, increased; for the men, as fast as they came up, joining in the shout, so swelled the sound that Xenophon, thinking something extraordinary had happened, mounted his horse and rode forward. Presently he heard the soldiers crying out, "*The sea! the sea!*" and cheering one another with congratulations. At this moment they all ran, the rear-guard as well as the rest, so that the horses and beasts of burden were driven forward in the crowd. When they all reached the top of the mountain, and saw the sea, they embraced one another with tears in their eyes, for they now deemed that they were near their home. Under the grateful impulse of the moment, they brought together a great number of stones, and built a mound, upon which they piled up the shields, staves, and bucklers, taken from the enemy. The guide was dismissed with the present of a horse, a silver cup, a Persian dress, and ten darics.

Nearly a year had been passed in this perilous march, and the successful accomplishment of the enterprise appears to have been entirely owing to the prudent counsels, fortitude, and discretion, of Xenophon; who, like Cæsar, has recorded, with an able pen, the deeds which he performed with consummate skill.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.



The Hebrews are the descendants of Abraham, a Chaldean, who, in obedience to the call of Heaven, took up his residence in Palestine, which in due time became peopled with that remarkable nation to whose history the Old Testament is chiefly devoted. The grandsons of Abraham sold their brother Joseph to

some Egyptian merchants, and this event led to the establishment of the whole family in Egypt. They increased with immense rapidity, and at last were led out of the country in which they were held in bondage, by the lawgiver Moses. After wandering forty years in the wilderness, during which period they were purified from the Egyptian superstitions they had imbibed, and moulded to a new and peculiar system of religion and government, they reached Palestine, or Canaan, their promised home, under the guidance of Joshua, who had succeeded Moses.

In the year 1085 B. C., David, the greatest of the Hebrew monarchs, was born. He greatly extended and enriched his kingdom, and left to his son Solomon the means of building the celebrated temple that is associated with his name — a work which he undertook just 3000 years after the creation. This was situated in the city of Jerusalem, which had long been the capital of the kingdom.

It is not necessary to detail the events which immediately followed. The temple which Solomon erected with so much skill and cost was subsequently destroyed, and, though again rebuilt, it was still again laid in ruins. Jerusalem was frequently taken, and almost destroyed, by hostile armies; but the piety of the people, who called it the Holy City, and regarded it as the seat and centre of their religion, caused it as often to be repeopled and restored.

In the year 63 B. C., the Roman general, Pompey the Great, captured Jerusalem, and reduced the whole of Judea to the authority of Rome. It continued for some time quiet, in a state of nominal independence;

Herod, an adherent of Mark Antony, and afterwards protected by Augustus, presiding over it, with the title of king. But the tyranny of his son, Archelaus, provoked Augustus to banish him, and degrade the country to the condition of a Roman province. Frequent rebellions, chiefly occasioned by fanaticism, brought the greatest misery upon the Jews. They believed that the whole world was to be brought into subjection to them. Not knowing the true Messiah, who had been foretold by their prophets, and whose mission upon this earth had been accomplished, they daily expected a temporal king and deliverer worthy of their corrupt prejudices and worldly ambition, so that whatever impostor chose to announce himself as such could easily excite them to rebellion. The Pharisees, resting their power on the mighty principle of superstition, preserved the fire of enthusiasm, and accused of idolatry all who did not concur in their opinions, and observe their religious ceremonies. They looked with holy horror upon the standards of the Roman legions, and the statues of the emperors, with which the sacred capital of Judea was profaned; and their religious prejudices combined with the national spirit to light up the flame of rebellion on the slightest occasion.

Nero sent Vespasian with an army to subdue that rebellious people. Vespasian had completed the conquest of the whole kingdom except the capital, when, being proclaimed emperor, he followed where fortune led the way, and departed for Rome, leaving his son Titus to continue the war, and reduce Jerusalem. When that city was first besieged, it was crowded with inhabitants, who had resorted to it from all quarters, to

celebrate the passover. The historian Josephus, who had deserted from his countrymen to serve in the Roman army, reckons eleven hundred thousand Jews to have perished in the course of the siege. The Roman historians lessen this number almost one half, and the history of Josephus bears such evident marks of flattery, credulity, and exaggeration, that we are compelled to distrust his marvellous accounts. Still, there is every reason to believe that the population of the city was enormous, and that a great part of the nation was thus collected within its walls, as in a prison, to undergo the most terrible calamities.

Josephus has given a circumstantial description of the fortifications of Jerusalem. It was strongly defended both by nature and art, and, in the quarter most accessible to an attack, three walls had been erected, on the outer of which were ninety towers. Titus selected, for the point of his attack, a place where only a double wall existed, and the city was more thinly inhabited than elsewhere. The Jews were well prepared to meet their enemies by their obstinate resolution, their despair of escape, and that devoted attachment to their temple and country, in the ruins of which they wished rather to perish than survive. Although, in the course of the siege, a party existed within the city desirous to submit to the Romans, yet, in the time of actual conflict, not one was found to act the part of a traitor. Yet, in this desperate extremity, the Jews were distracted by factions, nor was it till the Roman battering-rams assailed the outward wall, that the nearness of the danger united them against the common enemy. They defended the outer walls for

fifteen days, being successful in an early sally, and having burned the works of the besiegers. But at length they withdrew, leaving the Romans in possession of the northern part of the city. Titus pitched his tent within the wall, and renewed the siege by an attack upon the second fortification. In five days more he won this also, and occupied the enclosed portion of the city with a body of a thousand men. The houses were not burned, nor were any prisoners put to death, as he still hoped, by a show of clemency, to induce the remainder to submit.

But the besieged, mistaking his conduct, imagined that he despaired of capturing the city by force, and the merciful behavior of the Romans only increased the obstinacy of their defence. A second sally of the Jews drove the besiegers from their last-acquired post, and kept them at bay for three days; but on the fourth day the Jews were again repulsed, and compelled to remain within the interior wall. During the five following days, all active operations were discontinued, while the army was furnished with fresh supplies, and Titus reviewed his troops in sight of the besieged. The splendor of their equipments, and the discipline and order which the Roman forces displayed, struck consternation into the Jews; but they knew that they had gone too far to be allowed to purchase safety by submission, and death in war was preferable to captivity, or the sword of the executioner.

Still anxious to preserve the city, Titus sent Josephus to address his countrymen upon the wall, and persuade them to desist from a hopeless defence: his arguments had no effect upon the Jewish leaders, but many of the

common people were induced to desert to the Romans, and were kindly received by them, and allowed to go wherever they pleased. So many at length deserted, that a strict watch was kept upon them by the Jews, who put to death every person suspected of the design of going over to the enemy. Famine, with all its horrors, now began to appear, and the fury of the factions, which had been in a great measure allayed, broke out afresh. When corn ceased to be openly sold, robbers plundered the private houses; if they were disappointed in finding food, they tortured the inhabitants, on suspicion that they had concealed it. For a measure of wheat, the rich man sold his house or his jewels; for a handful of barley, the poor man parted with all he had. Families hid themselves while they partook of their scanty meal, in hopes to eat it undisturbed by robbers. The table was no longer set, but each man snatched from the hearth his half-baked cake, or devoured in silence unground corn. Every moral feeling was extinguished: the wife admitted not her husband to share her food; the son allowed his father to perish; mothers snatched the bread from their children's lips; some wandered out at night to collect herbs, who, on their return, were robbed of what they had gained at the peril of their lives. Such were the sufferings of the poor, while the rich were taken before Simeon and John, the leaders of the rival factions, and plundered and put to death.

Still the Jews continued to desert, notwithstanding the vigilance with which they were watched and guarded. Titus now altered his policy, and hoping, by an act of severity, to terrify the besieged into a

surrender, he ordered that the deserters should be crucified in sight of the city. No less than five hundred were executed in a single day, and the crucifixions continued until they were stopped by the want of wood for crosses, and of space for erecting them. The Roman soldiers made sport of this cruelty by hanging up their victims in grotesque postures. At last, Titus, finding that these severities had no effect, contented himself with striking off the hands of the deserters and sending them back. At the end of seventeen days, the Romans had erected four batteries; but they were soon destroyed by mines and fire, and it was only after a bloody conflict that the sallies of the besiegers were again checked. It was now quite evident to Titus that the defence of the city would be protracted to the last extremity.

In order, therefore, to prevent the escape of the inhabitants, and hasten the progress of the famine by cutting off every supply of provision from without, he commenced the stupendous work of carrying a line of circumvallation around the entire city. Three days' labor, and the united exertions of every man in the Roman army, sufficed for the erection of a wall which completely shut up Jerusalem from all communication with the surrounding country. The famine now made the most frightful inroads, and death, in its most terrible shape, wasted the miserable population. At first the corpses were buried at the public charge; but the numbers increased so rapidly, that, presently, they were thrown over the walls into the deep hollow that surrounded them. When Titus beheld this fearful sight, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and called God to

witness that he was not the guilty author of such dreadful deeds. The number of dead bodies carried out at one gate amounted, according to Josephus, to 110,000; and the same author estimates that not less than 600,000 of the lower orders were thus disposed of, besides the rich persons who were buried in the city. Many still escaped to the Romans; but the greater part of these perished miserably, some from intemperate eating, others by the hands of the soldiers, who slew their victims to obtain the gold and precious stones they were believed to have swallowed. In this way, 2000 perished in a single night, and, in defiance of the prohibition of Titus, this cruelty continued to be practised, chiefly by the Arabian and Syrian auxiliaries.

The leaders of the factions among the Jews supplied their followers by the plunder of the people. To cruelty John now added the guilt of sacrilege, melting down the vessels of gold which were in the service of the Temple, and distributing the wine and oil which the priests had religiously preserved for sacrifice. Titus pressed the siege more closely. The castle of Antonia was the most formidable defence of the city, and it was necessary to reduce it before the Romans could make any further impression upon the fortifications. Military engines of a prodigious size were erected against it, which cost three weeks' labor; and, as the neighborhood of Jerusalem produced no wood, the timber was procured from a distance of twelve miles. The famine became so severe, that, at length, the daily sacrifice ceased; and Titus, considering that this might be a favorable opportunity for negotiation, again despatched Josephus to make the attempt; but

with no better success than before. The castle of Antonia was taken, and many of the nobles, with two high priests, made their escape to the Romans. Titus received them kindly, and, upon the circulation of a report within the city that these persons had been put to death, he showed them to the Jews upon the wall, as an assurance of the safety which they might yet enjoy.

The Romans now assaulted the Holy Temple, the great object of the veneration of the Jews, but were repulsed, after the destruction of its porticoes. Finding that six days' labor of the battering-rams had produced no effect upon the walls of this edifice, they determined to set fire to the gates. For twenty-four hours the work of destruction was continued in this manner, when orders were given to the soldiers to extinguish the flames, and prepare for a general assault. After a most obstinate defence, the Jews were driven into the inner temple, leaving the outer court in possession of the Romans. The preservation of this edifice was anxiously desired by Titus, and every possible exertion was made by the troops to extinguish the fires. While thus employed, the besieged sallied out upon them. Amid the confusion, a soldier seized a flaming brand, and, throwing it in at an open window, set fire to one of the chambers. Titus was alarmed by the cry which the Jews raised within at the sight of the flames, and advanced with the main body of his troops. He gave the most peremptory orders to extinguish the flames; but the soldiers, wild in the heat of battle, and elated with the prospect of victory, pretended to misunderstand the orders, and excited each other to spread the fire. A dreadful scene of slaughter now ensued,

chiefly of unarmed persons, who had fled for refuge to the inner court and altar, confiding in the predictions of numerous false prophets, who assured them of the certainty of a miraculous deliverance. The flames had reached only the exterior chambers, and Titus, accompanied by his generals, entered into the holy place, and there beheld, with admiration, the splendor of this far-famed House of God.

In this manner was Jerusalem captured, in September of the year 70 AD. The inhabitants who survived were sold as slaves, and the second desolation of Judea was complete. The dispersion of the Jews over all the world, which is commonly dated from the destruction of Jerusalem, had, in reality, begun long before. The Ptolemies had transplanted large colonies of them into Egypt, Cyrene, and Cyprus; and Antiochus the Great settled great numbers in the towns of Asia. In the time of Cicero, there was a wealthy Jewish community in Italy. They were also scattered about in various other countries, both in Europe and Asia. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Mesopotamian Jews acknowledged an hereditary chief, who was called "the Prince of Captivity," while the western Jews, who were scattered all over the Roman empire, had their spiritual head in the patriarch of Tiberias. The civil condition of the Jews under the Roman empire was very similar to that of the Greeks under the Turks. Almost every where they were heavily taxed, and molested in their worship. The emperor Julian favored them, and attempted to rebuild their Temple; but Justinian oppressed them with great intolerance The rise of the Mahometans had an unfavorable

effect upon them in the East. Under the Gothic kings of Spain, they suffered persecution. Charlemagne protected them. In Germany they suffered much from popular fanaticism; and generally, throughout the middle ages, they were exposed to persecution in every part of Europe where they were found in any considerable numbers.

In the eighteenth century, a milder spirit of toleration began to manifest itself toward them in Europe. Maria Theresa and Joseph I., of Germany, granted them equal rights with the Christians. In Holland they were protected, and became a flourishing, honorable, and intelligent community. Napoleon, in the midst of his multifarious undertakings, had his attention drawn to these people by an accident. On witnessing the representation of Racine's tragedy of Esther, he said to one of his ministers, "That Ahasuerus was a wretched king; make me out a report of the state of the Jews in France." The result was, that an ordinance was issued, giving the Jews a regular organization throughout France, and granting them equal rights with other Frenchmen. This system has remained unaltered in that country, and has been followed by Prussia and other German powers. In the United States of America the Jews are few in number, but labor under no civil disabilities.

PALMYRA.

Ruins of Palmyra.

Amid the barren deserts of Arabia, a few fertile spots of soil arise out of the sandy waste, like islands out of the wide ocean. One of these places, termed *oases* by the inhabitants of those countries, became the seat of a rich, flourishing, and magnificent city, the immense ruins of which, at the present day, strike every

traveller with astonishment. Palmyra, as this city was called in the Latin, and Tadmor, in the Syriac language, are both derived from the multitude of palm-trees which grew upon this fertile region. It is situated about midway between the Orontes and the Euphrates, and sheltered by hills on two sides. The air is pure and temperate, and the soil watered by springs, and capable of producing both fruits and corn. A place possessing such singular advantages, and situated at a convenient distance between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, was soon frequented by the caravans which journeyed to the East and imported the rich commodities of India into Europe. This delightful halting-place amid the burning sands of the desert, therefore, became a great emporium of trade. The Phœnicians, who were among the earliest and most enterprising merchants, were probably acquainted with this site, and may have suggested to Solomon, with whom the king of Tyre was in alliance, the plan of building that "Tadmor in the wilderness," mentioned in the Second Book of Chronicles.

The first mention of Palmyra in Roman history is when Mark Antony, being in Syria, marched to surprise it, expecting a rich booty; but the inhabitants, hearing of his approach, disappointed him by transporting all their valuable effects across the Euphrates. In the time of Pliny, it was the centre of commerce with the East — a city of merchants and factors, who traded with the Parthians, on the one hand, and the Romans, on the other. The produce of India found its way into the Roman empire through Palmyra, and it became an ally to the Romans, as a free state. Insen-

sibly augmenting in wealth and importance, its independence was not disturbed, and it was greatly favored by Adrian and the Antonines, under whose reigns it attained its highest degree of splendor. But at length, after the victories of Trajan, the little republic of Palmyra sank into the bosom of Rome, and flourished more than a century and a half in the subordinate, though honorable, rank of a colony. It was during this quiet period, if we may judge from a few remaining inscriptions, that the wealthy Palmyrenians constructed those temples, palaces, and porticoes of Grecian architecture, whose ruins, scattered over several miles, attest, at the present day, the magnificence of that ancient city.

Odenathus, a native of Palmyra, having rendered great services to the Roman empire in a war against the Persians, assumed, with the consent of the emperor Gallienus, the title of king of Palmyra; and the emperor conferred upon him the command of all the Roman forces in the East. Odenathus, after obtaining several victories over the Persians, was treacherously killed, in 267 A. D., at Emesa, in Syria. His wife Zenobia, who accompanied him in his campaigns, and to whose prudence and courage much of the success of his military undertakings may be ascribed, assumed the sovereignty, under the title of Queen of the East. This extraordinary woman claimed her descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, and undoubtedly sprang from a distinguished family in the East. She was esteemed the most beautiful as well as the most heroic of her sex. Her complexion — for, in speaking of a lady, as Gibbon remarks, these trifles

become important — was somewhat dark, her teeth were of a pearly whiteness, and her large black eyes sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered by the most attractive sweetness. She was well acquainted with the Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Egyptian languages, was thoroughly instructed in polite literature under the tuition of the celebrated Longinus, and composed for her own use an epitome of Oriental history.

The confusion into which the Roman empire was thrown at this time by civil dissensions, and the numerous aspirants to the throne, left Zenobia undisturbed for several years during the reigns of Gallienus and Claudius. She governed Palmyra with equal vigor and policy, and projected vast schemes of dominion for herself and her three sons. By her general Zabdas, she defeated the Egyptians, subjugated their country, and added it to the extensive territories which Odenathus had possessed. But the death of that monarch had put an end to the authority which the senate of Rome had conferred upon him only as a personal distinction, and a Roman army soon made its appearance to reclaim the country over which she had usurped the absolute power. Zenobia was undismayed, and prepared to resist the imperial legions. In the first encounter she was successful; and the imperial general being defeated and taken prisoner, under the influence of mortification and despair, he put an end to his life. Zenobia continued to vindicate her title of queen of the East; her dominions augmented, and her authority was recognized in Cappadocia and Bithynia. The neighboring states of Arabia, Armenia, and Persia, dreaded her enmity and solicited her alliance. She lived in great

state, like the kings of Persia. When she harangued her soldiers, she wore a helmet; she commonly rode on horseback, and sometimes marched with the soldiers on foot. She knew when to be liberal, although her general character showed a love of frugality. Her habits were sober, though occasionally she would join in drinking parties with her generals — thus blending, with the stately pomp of the courts of Asia, the popular manners of the Roman princes.

Such was the woman whose ambition, it is said, led her to project the bold and gigantic scheme of overthrowing the Roman empire — a design not obscurely indicated in her practice of exhibiting her sons to the troops adorned with the imperial purple. The civil commotions of Rome were at length quieted by the accession of Aurelian to the throne. That martial prince, as soon as he had established tranquillity in the West, resolved to wipe away the disgrace of suffering the richest provinces of the East to remain under the sway of a female usurper. He crossed over to Asia with a powerful army, and advanced in a victorious course to Antioch, where he was encountered by the forces of Zenobia. In a battle near that city he routed the cavalry of her general Zabdas, upon whose retreat the queen fled to Emesa. At that city she made a second stand, and was again defeated. After this, she found it impossible to collect a third army, and withdrew the shattered remains of her forces to Palmyra. Aurelian advanced to that city, which was prepared for a vigorous resistance. In order to avoid the tedious delay of a siege, he sent a summons to the queen, offering her favorable terms, as a private person, in case

of her submission; to which she replied in the style of one who still regarded herself as a powerful sovereign. The siege of Palmyra was then begun. "The Roman people," says Aurelian in one of his letters, "speak with derision of the war which I am waging against a woman. They are ignorant both of the character and power of Zenobia. It is impossible to enumerate her warlike preparations, of arrows, stones, and every species of missile weapons. Every part of the walls of Palmyra is provided with military engines, which discharge stones and artificial fires. The fear of punishment has armed her with a desperate courage. Yet still I trust in the protecting deities of Rome, who have hitherto been propitious to all my undertakings."

Zenobia indulged a strong hope that the patience of the besiegers would ere long be worn out, and that famine would compel them to recross the desert. She was encouraged, too, by the reasonable expectation that the Eastern princes, and particularly the king of Persia, would take up arms in the defence of their most natural ally. But in these hopes she was disappointed; fortune, and the perseverance of Aurelian, overcame every obstacle in his way. The death of Sapor, king of Persia, distracted the councils of that nation, and the inconsiderable succors that attempted to relieve Palmyra were easily intercepted by the besiegers. From every part of Syria a regular succession of convoys arrived in the Roman camp with supplies of provisions. The besieged, instead of the besiegers, began to suffer from famine, and Zenobia saw that the city must fall. But still scorning to surrender, she mounted the swiftest of her dromedaries, and, escaping from

Palmyra, directed her course toward the Euphrates, intending to take refuge in the Persian territories. She was pursued by the Roman light horse, and captured just as she was about to pass the river. She was brought before Aurelian, who received her with a stern countenance, and demanded how she had dared to resist the emperors of Rome. She replied, with a prudent mixture of firmness and respect, "Because I disdained to consider as Roman emperors an Aureolus or a Gallienus. You, alone, I acknowledge as my conqueror and my sovereign." The soldiers, regarding her as another Cleopatra, demanded her death: her courage deserted her in the hour of trial: she trembled at their angry clamors; and, if we may believe the historian Zosimus, she purchased her life by the unworthy act of throwing all the blame of her rebellion upon her ministers and counsellors.

Palmyra surrendered, and was treated by the conqueror with unexpected lenity. The arms, horses, and camels, with an immense treasure of gold, silver, silk, and precious stones, were all delivered up to Aurelian, who, leaving only a garrison of six hundred archers, returned to Emesa. Zenobia was pardoned, but her ministers were put to death. Among them was the celebrated Longinus, whose genius and learning were incapable of moving a fierce, unlettered soldier, like Aurelian. Without uttering a complaint, he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing words of comfort on his afflicted friends. Aurelian returned toward Rome; but scarcely had he set foot upon European territory, when he was provoked by the intelligence that the Palmy-

renians had massacred the Roman governor and garrison, and raised again the standard of revolt. This act of desperate rashness proved the ruin of that unfortunate city. Without a moment's delay, the emperor marched back to Palmyra, and took his revenge by an indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants; the unhappy remnant had never afterwards the courage or the strength to rise against their masters.

The triumph of Aurelian at Rome was celebrated with uncommon magnificence. No delicacy of sentiment was likely to induce the fierce imperial soldier to forego the indulgence of exhibiting, on the occasion, so striking a spectacle as the person of his royal captive. When the pompous procession made its appearance, every eye was turned upon Zenobia, who followed, on foot, a magnificent chariot which, in her days of prosperity and ambitious pride, she had destined for her own triumphal entry into Rome. Her beauteous figure was confined with fetters and chains of gold, borne up by slaves, and she almost fainted beneath the load of jewels by which she was adorned. No particulars are related of her behavior in a scene which Cleopatra, whom she had proposed as her model and example, had died to avoid; but we are informed that Aurelian afterwards treated her with humanity, assigning her an agreeable residence at Tibur, where she passed the remainder of her life as a Roman matron. According to some accounts, she married a senator.

Aurelian granted the Palmyrenians the privilege of rebuilding their city; but it is easier to destroy than to restore. The metropolis of Zenobia, the seat of commerce, arts, and luxury, gradually sank into obscurity,

poverty, and ruin. Dioclesian and Justinian made it a military post. The Arabs captured it in the caliphate of Abu-Bekr; but we hear no more of it till the twelfth century, when the Hebrew traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, informs us that it was walled, and contained four hundred Jews. It was plundered by Tamerlane, in 1400, and became so completely ruined and desolate, that, since that period, it has had no inhabitants except a few Bedouin Arabs, who pitch their tents, or build their huts, in the peristyle of the great temple.

Temple in Palmyra.

History for a long time preserved little more than the name of this great city, for the world had a very indistinct idea of the real grandeur and power which belonged to it in ancient times. Its existence was

scarcely remembered in Europe, when, toward the end of the seventeenth century, some English merchants of Aleppo, who had heard the Bedouin Arabs talk of the immense and magnificent ruins to be found in the desert, felt a curiosity to ascertain the truth of these accounts, which were related to them apparently with the most extravagant exaggeration. The first attempt to reach Palmyra was made in 1678, but without success, the adventurers being robbed by the Arabs, and compelled to return. In 1691, the effort was renewed, and Palmyra was discovered. The accounts which the travellers published in the British Philosophical Transactions, were deemed so extraordinary that, like the stories of Marco Polo and Mendez Pinto, they were rejected as incredible. People could not be made to believe that, in the heart of a sandy desert, a spot so remote from any habitable territory, so magnificent a city could have existed. It was not till after repeated visits to the ruins, and the publication of accurate drawings of them, that all doubt upon the subject was removed: then it was universally acknowledged that, in magnificence, antiquity had left nothing, either in Greece or Italy, worthy of comparison with the ruins of Palmyra.

Nothing can be more striking than the scene presented by the wreck of this city, and none can be more difficult to describe. The objects may be specified, but it is far more difficult to convey a general impression of the whole in language. The ground is strewed to a wide extent with crumbling walls, pillars, arches, porticoes, colonnades, and fragments of architecture, of every description, in every variety of perfection and

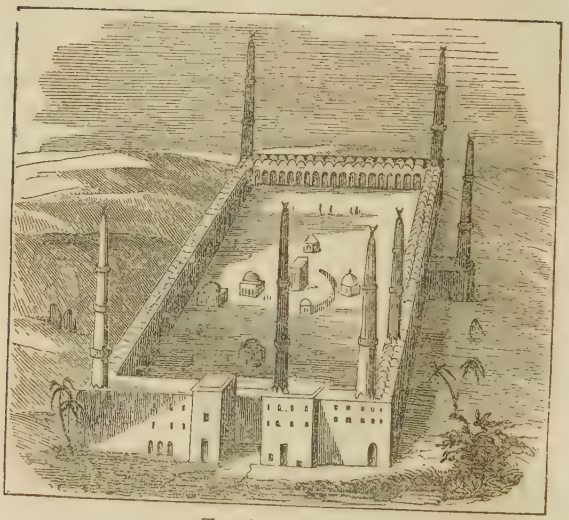
dilapidation. Sometimes the eye lights upon a palace, of which nothing remains but the courts and walls; sometimes upon a temple, whose peristyle is half thrown down; then upon a portico, a gallery, or triumphal arch. Here stand groups of columns, whose symmetry is destroyed by the fall of some of them: in another place we see them arranged in rows, of such length that, like alleys of trees, they deceive the sight, and assume the appearance of continued walls. If from this striking spectacle we cast our eyes upon the ground, another, almost as varied, presents itself. We behold, every where, subverted shafts of columns, some whole, others shattered to pieces, or dislocated in their joints. Wherever we look, the earth is strewed with vast stones half buried, with broken entablatures, damaged capitals, mutilated friezes, disfigured relievos, and effaced sculptures. One of the most magnificent structures was the Temple of the Sun: the court which enclosed it was an eighth of a mile square, with a double range of columns extending round the whole interior. Within this noble edifice, the traveller may now be greeted with the sight of twenty or thirty wretched mud-walled huts, the abodes of as many Arab families, who constitute the whole population of the glorious capital of Queen Zenobia.

On the north of the city are the ruins of the ancient sepulchres, which have excited as great admiration as the structures within the walls. They are square towers, four or five stories high, and stand on both sides of a hollow way extending more than a mile; they form, doubtless, a mere portion of those which existed in ancient times. At a distance, they seem like steeples

of ruined churches, or the bastions of decayed fortifications. Many of them are of marble, and adorned inside with beautiful sculptures, which, unfortunately, are now much defaced.

Such are the magnificent remains of this wonderful place. Seldom has the world seen so beautiful a city — equally remarkable for the splendor of its edifices, its great opulence, its singular situation, and the striking vicissitudes of its fortune — as was this in its days of glory: and now, though it lie in ruins, there are few names which are associated in our recollection with so much lively feeling of romance and poetry as that of Palmyra.

THE SARACENS.



Temple of Mecca.

In a preceding volume of the Cabinet Library, we have given a sketch of the life of Mahomet, and the history of the first propagation of his doctrines. The death of the Prophet seemed for an instant to threaten the extinction both of the new doctrine, and of the political power which he had established. After his fol-

View of Bagdad.

lowers had indulged their first burst of grief for his loss, the necessity of appointing a successor to his sacerdotal and regal office immediately revived that fierce and habitual spirit of discord among the Arabian tribes, which had been subdued only by the reverence entertained for his spiritual authority, by the success of his arms, and the consummate arts of his policy. All the male offspring of Mahomet had perished in their infancy. Civil dissensions among the different tribes immediately followed his death: the pretensions of Mecca rekindled the ancient rivalry between that capital and Medina; and when a public assembly was convened for the election of a successor to the Prophet, different parties and individuals urged their contending claims with all the vehemence of Arabian eloquence and passion. The schism became so violent, that, to prevent an appeal to arms, the pacific Abu-Bekr would imprudently have adopted the rash suggestion of nominating two persons, with equal powers, as representatives of the Prophet. He accordingly proposed Omar and Abu-Obeidah for this divided sovereignty; and if the proposal had been accepted, the same hour might have dissolved the rising empire of the Saracens, and crushed their religion in the bud.

In this crisis, the modest or patriotic self-denial of Omar saved the fortunes of Mahometanism. Declaring his own unfitness to share so weighty a charge, he proposed that the venerable Abu-Bekr should himself be appointed as the sole commander of the faithful; and, stretching forth his hand as the accustomed pledge of fealty, he proclaimed himself the subject of the first CALIPH, or successor of the Prophet. The

spontaneous acclamations of the assembly recognized the wisdom of this choice, and Abu-Bekr was immediately saluted as the supreme lord and judge of Islam. His authority was at once acknowledged at Mecca and Medina; some opposition was made by the barbarous tribes who had been overawed by the arms of Mahomet, or dazzled with his success, and who now became lukewarm in the new faith; but they were soon quelled by the arms of the caliph, and all Arabia became subjected to his sway, and confirmed in the Mahometan faith.

The effectual establishment of the new monarchy and religion immediately kindled the ardor of proselytism and conquest which was inculcated by the creed, and adapted to the temperament of a fierce and enthusiastic people. The caliph despatched circular letters to the Arabian tribes in the following words: "I praise the Most High God, and I pray for his prophet Mahomet. This is to acquaint you that I purpose to send the true believers into Syria, to wrest that country out of the hands of the infidels; and I would have you to know that fighting for religion is an act of obedience to God." The riches of Syria were well known to the Arabs, and the summons of the caliph was answered by a formidable host from the desert. The eastern borders of the Roman empire were soon alarmed by the invasion of a host of fierce enemies, named *Saracens*. The origin and signification of this word was for a long time doubtful; some derived it from *Sarah*, the wife of Abraham; others, from *Sahra*, a desert; but its true derivation is from the Arabic *Sharkeyn*, "the eastern people," first cor-

rupted by the Greeks into *Sarakenoi*, and thence into *Saraceni*, by the Latin writers.

The whole history of the Saracen conquests forms but a long practical commentary on the precepts of the first caliph, and the protracted continuation of his first expedition. From the hour in which the Saracen deluge burst the bounds of the sterile peninsula, until it finally receded from the fertile plains of France, its advance was perpetual, and its fury unmitigated. Syria was immediately overrun, and the capture of Damascus completed the final subjugation of that country. The aged Abu-Bekr expired before he received the intelligence of this conquest, and he bequeathed the succession to the virtuous and inflexible Omar. The courage and martial enthusiasm of the new caliph were soon conspicuous. Omar, according to the simple and expressive narrative of his Arabic historian, rode upon a red camel with a couple of sacks, in one of which he carried a store of raw barley, rice, or wheat, and in the other, fruits. Before him he carried a leathern bottle of water, and behind him a large wooden dish. Thus furnished and equipped, the caliph travelled; and when he arrived at any place where he was to rest all night, he filled his platter with the homely fare, and entertained his fellow-travellers, who, without any distinction, ate with him out of the same dish.

The Greek emperor Heraclius was then in a slothful old age, and, though residing in Syria, could not be roused, either by the memory of his past fame or the sense of present dishonor, to face the Mahometan leader in battle; but, terrified by the rapid progress of the Saracen arms, he bade an eternal farewell to Syria,

and, embarking for Constantinople, finally abandoned the richest province of his empire to the invaders. The rovers of the Arabian deserts were left in possession of one of the fairest regions of the East; and the settlement of their victorious bands in the conquered provinces prepared Damascus to become, in the next generation, the chosen seat of the Mussulman empire. In the third year of Omar's reign, when the success of his subjects in Syria had attracted the fanatical and rapacious ardor of new myriads from the Arabian deserts, Omar despatched an army under one of his generals, Abu-Obeyd, to invade Persia; and in the year of the Christian era 641, that monarchy experienced the first irruption of the fanatic Saracens. The Persian army took post on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, where they were attacked by Abu-Obeyd. The action was furious, but the Arabian chief lost it by his imprudent courage. He observed a white elephant in the centre of the Persian host; towards this animal, which he deemed the object of their superstition, he fought his way with irresistible valor, and, with one blow of his cimeter, struck off his trunk. Maddened by pain, the furious elephant rushed upon the rude assailant, and trampled him to death. The Arabs, dispirited by the fate of their leader, fled in confusion; numbers were slain in the action, and more were drowned, as the bridge over the Euphrates, which they had crossed, was broken down. The few that survived retreated to Salabeh, a place on the west bank of the river, and informed Omar of what had happened. The caliph reënforced the shattered detachment; they advanced under Jereer ben Abdallah into Irak, but were

again encountered and defeated by Mehran, the general of Pooran-dokt. The celebrated Durupsh Kawanee, or apron of the blacksmith Kawah, which had been the royal standard of Persia for many ages, was displayed in both these battles, and was, for the last time, propitious to Persia. Encouraged by success, Mehran ventured on another action, but was defeated and slain, and his dispirited troops fled in dismay to Madain. The Persians attributed their bad success to the incompetency of their powerless sovereigns. Ruler after ruler was dethroned and murdered, until the elevation of Yezdijird, which seems to have given a momentary hope to the falling nation.

His first measure was to send an envoy to Saad ben Wakas, the leader whom the caliph had appointed to the chief command of his forces against Persia; and Saad, in compliance with the request communicated through this person, sent a deputation to Madain, consisting of three old Arab chiefs. When these persons were seated in the presence of Yezdijird, that monarch addressed the principal person among them, whose name was Shaikh Maghurah, in the following words: "We have always held you Arabs in the lowest estimation. You have hitherto been known in Persia only in two characters — as merchants and as beggars. Your food is green lizards; your drink, salt water; your apparel, garments of coarse hair. But, of late, you have come in numbers to Persia; you have eaten of good food, you have drunk of sweet water, and have enjoyed the luxury of soft raiment. You have reported these enjoyments to your brethren, and they are flocking to partake of them. But, not

satisfied with all the good things you have thus obtained, you desire to impose a new religion upon us, who are unwilling to receive it. You appear to me like the fox of our fable, who went into a garden where he found plenty of grapes. The generous gardener would not disturb him. The produce of his abundant vineyard would, he thought, be little diminished by a poor hungry fox enjoying himself; but the animal, not content with his good fortune, went and informed all his tribe of the excellence of the grapes and the good-nature of the gardener. Presently, the garden was overrun with foxes, and its indulgent master was forced to bar the gates, and kill all the intruders, to save himself from ruin. However, as I am satisfied that you have been compelled to the conduct which you have pursued, from absolute want, I will not only pardon you, but load your camels with wheat and dates, that, when you return to your native land, you may feast your countrymen. But be assured, if you are insensible to my generosity, and remain in Persia, you shall not escape my just vengeance."

The resolute and undaunted envoy heard, unmoved, a speech at once displaying the extreme of pride and of weakness. "Whatever thou hast said," replied Shaikh Maghurah, "concerning the former condition of the Arabs, is true. Their food was green lizards; they buried their infant daughters alive; nay, some of them feasted on dead carcasses and drank blood; while others slew their relations, and thought themselves great and valiant, when, by such acts, they became possessed of more property. They were clothed with hair garments, knew not good from evil, and made no

distinction between that which is lawful and that which is unlawful. Such was once our state. But God, in his mercy, has sent us, by a holy prophet, a sacred volume which teaches us the true faith. By it we are commanded to war against infidels, and to exchange our poor and miserable condition for wealth and power. We now solemnly call upon you to receive our religion. If you consent, not an Arab shall enter Persia without your permission, and our leaders will only demand the established taxes which all believers are bound to pay. If you do not accept our religion, you are required to pay the tribute fixed for infidels. Should you reject both these propositions, you must prepare for war."

Yezdijird was still too proud to accept such degrading conditions. The embassy was dismissed, and the war renewed with all the vigor of which the declining empire was capable. The Persian army was commanded by Roostum Ferokhzad, who endeavored to avoid a general action: when, at last, compelled to fight, he was defeated with immense loss. Almost the whole Persian army, which, we are told, was 100,000 strong, fell in the celebrated battle of Kudseah; in which Mahometan authors assert that the Arabs lost only 3000 men. The booty was great, but the inhabitants of the desert were yet ignorant of its value. "I will give you any quantity of this yellow metal for a little white," was an exclamation made, after the battle, by an Arabian soldier who desired to exchange gold, which he had never before seen, for silver, which he had learned to appreciate. But what gave its chief importance to this action, was the capture of the famous Durupsh Kawance, the royal standard of the Persian

empire—an event deemed, both by Arabians and Persians, a certain presage of the result of the war. Yezdijird, when he heard of this great defeat, fled to Hulwan, with all the property he could carry. Saad, after taking possession of Madain, pursued him, and sent his nephew Hashem to attack a body of troops which had arrived from Shirwan and Aderbijan. These took shelter in the fort of Idwallah, where they were attacked and made prisoners. On learning this, Yezdijird left his army and fled to Rhe. Hashem advanced to Hulwan, which he soon reduced. The city of Aharaz, which appears to have been a place of great importance at that period, was also taken by the Arabs. Thence Saad marched, by the caliph's order, to Amber; but, finding that situation unhealthy, he halted his army at Koofa, a place which soon after acquired celebrity. The foundations of Bassorah were laid in the same year by the Arab chief Alabah Ghuzwan.

Saad, who continued to govern all that part of Persia which he had conquered, from his fixed camp, or new city of Koofa, was recalled by Omar, on account of a complaint made against him by those under his rule; and Omar Yuseer was appointed his successor. Yezdijird, encouraged by the removal of a leader whom he so much dreaded, assembled an army of 150,000 men, from Khorassan, Rhe, and Hamadan; and, placing it under the command of Firouzan, the bravest of the Persian generals, resolved to put the fate of his empire at issue on one great battle. The caliph, when he heard of these preparations, ordered reënforcements to be sent to his army in Persia from every quarter of his dominions; and, committing the whole to the chief

command of Noman, he directed him to exert his utmost efforts to destroy forever the impious worship of fire. The Arabian force assembled at Koofa, and thence marched to the plains of Nahavund, on which the Persians had established a camp, surrounded by a deep intrenchment. During two months, these great armies continued in sight of each other, and many skirmishes took place. The Persian general appearing determined not to quit his position, the zeal of the leader of the Faithful became impatient of delay. He drew up his army in order of battle, and thus addressed them: "My friends, prepare yourselves to conquer or to drink of the sweet sherbet of martyrdom. I shall now call the Tekbeer* three times. At the first you will gird your loins; at the second, mount your steeds; at the third, point your lances, and rush to victory or to Paradise." "As to me," said Noman, with a raised and enraptured voice, "I shall be a martyr! When I am slain, obey the orders of Huzeefah-ebn-Aly-Oman."

The moment he had done speaking, the first sound of the Tekbeer was heard throughout the camp. At the second, all were upon their horses; and at the third, which was repeated by the whole army, the Mahometans charged with a fury that was irresistible. Noman was slain, as he predicted; but his army gained a great and memorable victory: 30,000 Persians were pierced by their lances; 80,000 more were drowned in the deep trench by which they had surrounded their camp. Their general, Firouzan, with

* The battle-cry of the Saracens: "*Allah akbar!*" God is most mighty

4000 men, fled to the hills; but such was the terror on one side, and confidence on the other, that he was pursued, defeated, and slain, by a body of not more than a thousand men.

The battle of Nahavund decided the fate of Persia, which now fell under the dominion of the Arabian caliphs. Yezdijird protracted for several years a wretched and precarious existence. He first fled to Seistan, then to Khorassan, and lastly to Merv. The governor of that city invited the Khagan of the Tartars to take possession of the person of the fugitive monarch. The sovereign accepted the offer; his troops entered Merv, the gates of which were opened to them by the treacherous governor, and made themselves masters of it, in spite of the desperate resistance of the surprised, but brave and enraged inhabitants. Yezdijird escaped on foot from the town during the confusion of the contest. He reached a mill, eight miles from Merv, and entreated the miller to conceal him. The man told him he owed a certain sum to the owner of the mill, and that if he paid the debt, he should have his protection against all pursuers. The monarch agreed to this proposal; and, after giving his rich sword and belt as pledges of his sincerity, retired to rest with perfect confidence. But the miller could not resist the temptation of making his fortune by the possession of the rich arms and robes of the unfortunate prince, whose head he severed from his body with the sword which he had received from him, and then cast his corpse into the watercourse that turned the mill.

Crowned with the glories of a triple conquest, — of Syria, Persia, and Egypt, — the caliphate of Omar

deserves to be distinguished as the heroic age of Saracen history. For nearly a century, indeed, after its termination, the Arabian arms were still impelled through their triumphant career, with no apparent diminution of energy; but the gigantic foundations of the Saracen power were perfected in this short period of less than ten years. In these conquests, the fresh and vigorous enthusiasm of the personal companions of Mahomet was exercised and expended; and the generation of warriors whose simple fanaticism had been inflamed by the preaching of the Prophet, was, in a great measure, consumed in the sanguinary combats and perpetual toils of ten arduous campaigns. In one season alone, at the end of the Syrian war, which is mournfully celebrated in their annals as "the year of destruction," no less than 25,000 Moslems were swept away by pestilence.

The religious and political unity of the disciples of Islam was most strikingly preserved in the inviolable sanctity with which the office of the Prophet and his first two successors was revered; but the charm was forever broken from the hour when the venerated Omar fell, in the tenth year of his reign, by the stroke of an assassin. This crime was the first act of treason which stained the history of the caliphate; but it was the signal and the precedent for a thousand bloody tragedies, of regicide and tyranny, conspiracy and massacre. It is the event which offers a marked termination to the first epoch of the Saracen fortunes—the epoch of pure fanaticism, or the heroic age of Saracen virtue and prowess; it introduced the first germ of anarchy into the annals of the caliph-

ate, and is the point from which we begin to move, with accelerated rapidity, through the disorderly reigns and the troubled series of the commanders of the Faithful.

Simon Ockley, an Oriental scholar of rare merit, "an original in every sense," as Gibbon styles him, compiled, mostly in a jail at Cambridge, where he was confined for debt, his History of the Saracens, the most interesting work of the kind in the English language, and one which is admired, by every reader, for the unaffected simplicity of the style, and the lively pathos of many of its minute relations. "Scarcely any narrative," says Mr. Hallam, "ever exceeded in beauty the death of Hosein." We are induced to extract this passage, as Ockley's work is little known in our country. A furious civil war had broken out between the Caliph Ali and his rival Moawiyah. By the intrigues of the latter, Syria, Egypt, and Arabia, were already completely seduced from their allegiance, when the stroke of fanaticism anticipated the last triumph of rebellion. In the temple of Mecca, three devotees agreed that the peace of religion could be secured only by the common death of Moawiyah, his friend Amrou, and Ali. Each fanatic chose his victim, and poisoned his dagger; but the only fatal blow reached the heart of Ali. His death left the rich prize of the Mahometan empire to the undisputed grasp of his rival; but on the death of Moawiyah, the civil dissensions were renewed. It is at this point that we commence our extract. Hosein, it will be remembered, was the son of Ali.

"Although Abdollah seemed to have interest sufficient to carry his point, and had beat down all oppo-

sition, and the Medinians had openly declared for him, so that his fame was spread round about the country, yet Hosein's glory outshined him: both upon account of his near relation to Mahomet, and his own personal qualifications, he was reverenced above all men alive. The Cufians were so impatient that they sent message after message to him, assuring him that, if he would but once make his appearance among them, he should not only be secure as to his own person, but, in consideration of the esteem which they had for his father Ali and his family, they would render him their homage, and acknowledge him for the only true and lawful caliph. These solicitations made Hosein resolve to go directly to Cufah. The wisest of his friends looked upon it as a degree of madness in him to embark in such a desperate undertaking. No advice taking place with Hosein, though Abdollah, the son of Abbas, had sat up all night with him to no purpose, he set out from Mecca with a competent retinue, on the eighth day of the month Dulhagjah. The emir, Obeidollah, was very well apprized of his approach. When he came as far as Assheraph, he met a body of a thousand horse, under the command of Harro, the son of Yezid, of the tribe of Temimah, a man no way disaffected to Hosein's interest. Hosein's men had been for water at the river, and drawn a great deal for their horses, which he did not make use of for himself alone, but ordered them to water the horses of his enemies. At noon, he commanded the people to be called together, according to the custom of the Mahometans, and came out to them with nothing but his vest, his girdle, and his shoes, and alleged the invitation of the Cufians as the reason of his undertaking that

expedition. Then he asked Harro if he would pray amongst his men, who answered, that after him he would. They parted that night, and went every man to his tent, and the next day Hosein made a speech to them, wherein he asserted his title, and exhorted them to submit to him. Harro replied, that he had no commission to fight with him, but was commanded not to part with him till he had conducted him to Cufah.

"When they came to Adib, they met four horsemen, who turned out of the way to come up to Hosein. Harro would have rode between them and Hosein, but he would not permit it. Thirmah was their guide, whom, as soon as they came up, Hosein asked, 'What news?' Thirmah answered, 'All the nobility are against you to a man; as for the rest, their hearts are with you, but to-morrow their swords will be drawn against you!' Hosein asked him if he could tell any tidings of his messenger Kais, (one that he had sent before him to prepare the way.) Thirmah said, 'As for your messenger Kais, he was brought before Obeidollah, who commanded him to curse you and your father, Ali, instead of which he stood up and prayed for you and your father; and cursed Obeidollah and his father Ziyad, and persuaded the people to come to your assistance, and gave them a notice of your coming, for which Obeidollah commanded him to be thrown down headlong from the top of the castle.' At this news Hosein wept.

"When night came on, he ordered his men to provide as much water as they should have occasion for, and continued his march in the night. As he went on, he nodded a little, and waking on a sudden, said, 'We be-

long to God, and to him we return. I saw a horseman who said, "Men travel by night, and the destinies travel by night towards them!" This I know to be a message of our deaths.' In the morning, after the prayers were over, he mended his pace, and taking the left-hand road, came to Nineve, (not the ancient, but another town of the same name,) and, as he rode with his bow upon his shoulders, there came up a person who saluted Harro, but took no notice of him. He delivered a letter to Harro, containing orders from Obeidollah to lead Hosein and his men into a place where there was neither tower nor fortification, till his messengers and forces should come up. This was on Friday, the second day of the month Moharram. The day after, Amer, the son of Saïd, came up with 4000 men. Obeidollah, who was resolved not to venture Hosein too near Cufah for fear of an insurrection, sent Shamer to Amer with orders that, if Hosein and his men would surrender themselves, they should be received; if not, that he should first propose to Amer to fall upon them and kill them. Amer drew up his forces in the evening, on the ninth of the month Moharram, and came up to Hosein's tent, who was sitting in his door just after evening prayer. He and his brother Abbas desired of them to give him time till the next morning, and he would answer them. At their first advancing, he was leaning upon his sword and nodding. His sister came and waked him, and as he lifted up his head, he said, 'I saw the Prophet in my dream, who said, "Thou shalt rest with us."' Then she struck her face, and said, 'Woe be to us!'—He answered, 'Sister, you have no reason to complain;

God have mercy upon you! hold your peace.' In the night she came sighing to him again, and said, 'Alas for the desolation of my family! I wish I had died yesterday rather than have lived till to-day. My mother Fatemah is dead, and my father Ali, and my brother Hasan! Alas for the destruction that is past, and the dregs of it that remain behind.' Hosein looked upon her, and said, 'Sister, do not let the devil take away your temper.' Then, beating her face and tearing open her bosom, she fell down in a swoon.

"Hosein, having recovered her with a little cold water, said, 'Sister, put your trust in God, and know that the people of the earth shall die, and the people of the heaven shall not remain, and every thing shall perish but the presence of God who created all things by his power, and shall make them return, and they shall return to him alone.' Then charging her not to use any such behavior after his death, he took her by the hand and led her into his tent. Then he commanded his men to cord the tents close together, and put the ropes through one another, that the enemy might not get between them. They made a lane of their tents, and Hosein in the night ordered a trench to be digged at one end of it, into which they threw a good quantity of wood and cane, which they set on fire to prevent their being surrounded. They spent all that night in hearty prayer and supplication, whilst all the while the horse of the enemies' guard were riding round about them.

"The next morning, both sides prepared themselves for battle. Hosein put his small forces, which amounted to no more than two-and-thirty horse and forty foot, into good order. Amer, having drawn up his men, and

delivered the flag to one of his servants, came very near. In the mean time, Hosein went into a tent, and having first washed and anointed, he perfumed himself with musk. Several of the great men did the like. One of them asking what was the meaning of it, another answered, "Alas! there is nothing between us and the black-eyed girls, but only that these people come down upon us and kill us.' Then Hosein mounted his horse, and took the Koran, and laid it before him, and coming up to the people, invited them to the performance of their duty, adding, 'O God! thou art my confidence in every trouble, and my hope in all adversity.' He set his son Ali on horseback, the eldest of that name, for there were two of them, but he was very sick. He then reminded his men of his excellency, the nobility of his birth, the greatness of his power, and said, 'Consider with yourselves whether or no such a man as I am is not better for you; I, who am the son of your Prophet's daughter, besides whom there is no other on the face of the earth. Ali was my father; Jaafar and Hamzah, the chief of the martyrs, were both my uncles; and the apostle of God, upon whom be peace, said both of me and my brother, that we were the chief of the youth of Paradise! If you will believe me, what I say is true, for in the name of God I never told a lie in earnest since I had my understanding.'

"Just upon this, a party of about thirty horse wheeled about and came up to Hosein, who expected nothing less than to be attacked by them. Harro, that had met with Hosein first, was at the head of them; he came to testify his repentance, and proffer his services to Hosein. He accepted his repentance, and Harro stood

forth, and called to the people, and to Amer in particular, 'Alas for you! will you not accept those three articles which the son of the apostle's daughter offers you?' Amer told him that, if it lay in his power, he would, but Obeidollah was against it. Then Amer said to the slave to whom he had given the flag, 'Bring up the colors.' As soon as they came up to the front of the troops, Shamer shot an arrow, and said, 'Bear witness that I shot the first arrow.' The battle thus begun, they exchanged arrows apace on both sides. There were several single combats fought, in all which Hosein's men were superior, because they fought like men that were resolved to die.

"Then Shamer gave an onset with the left wing with such violence, that they came very near Hosein; but Hosein's horse repulsed them bravely, so that they sent to Amer for some archers, who ordered them about five hundred. As soon as they came up, they let fly their arrows so thick among Hosein's horse, that they were all immediately reduced to foot. Harro, perceiving his horse wounded, leaped off from him with his sword in his hand, as eager as a lion. Amer, perceiving that they were inaccessible every where but in the front, commanded his men to pull down the tents; but that not succeeding, for Hosein's men killed those that went about it, Shamer called for fire to burn Hosein's tent, (having first struck his javelin into it,) with all that were in it. The women shrieked and ran out of it. 'How!' said Hosein, 'what! wouldst thou burn my family?' One of the great men came to Shamer, and represented to him how scandalous and now unbecoming a soldier it was to scare the women.

He began to be ashamed of it, and was thinking of retreating, when some of Hosein's men attacked him, and drove him off the ground. It was now noon, and Hosein bade some of his friends speak to them to forbear till he had said the prayers proper for that time of day. One of the Cufians said, 'They will not be heard.' Habib answered, 'Alas for you! shall your prayers be heard, and not the prayers of the apostle's family, upon whom be peace?' Habib fought with great courage till he was killed. Then Hosein said the noon prayers amongst the poor remainder of his shattered company, and to the rest of the office he added the prayer of fear, never used but in cases of extremity. During the fight he said several prayers, in one of which is this pathetic expression, 'Let not the dews of heaven distil upon them; and withhold thou from them the blessing of the earth; for they first invited me, and then deceived me.'

"After the prayers were over, the fight was renewed with great vehemency on both sides, till they came up close to Hosein; but his friends protected him. Hosein's party were now almost all cut off, and his eldest son, Ali, was first wounded with a lance, and afterwards cut in pieces. The rest were, most of them, singled out by the archers and shot. Hosein staid a long time, and nobody came to him; but he turned back again, for hardly any of them could find in his heart to kill him. At last, one came and struck him with a sword upon the head, and wounded him, so that his head-piece was full of blood, which he took off and flung away, saying that he had 'neither eaten nor drank out of it,' and bound up his head in his turban.

Quite tired out, he sat down at the door of his tent, and took his little son, Abdollah, upon his lap, who was presently killed with an arrow. Hosein took his hand full of the child's blood, and, throwing it towards heaven, said, 'O Lord! if thou withholdest help from us from heaven, give it to those that are better, and take vengeance upon the wicked.' At last, he grew extremely thirsty, and whilst he was drinking he was shot in the mouth with an arrow. He then lift up his hands to heaven, which were both full of blood, and prayed very earnestly. Then Shamer encouraged some of the stoutest of his men to surround him. At the same time, a little nephew of his, a beautiful child, with jewels in his ears, came to embrace him, and had his hand cut off with a sword; to whom Hosein said, 'Thy reward, child, is with God; thou shalt go to thy pious forefathers.' Then they surrounded him, and he threw himself into the midst of them, charging sometimes on the right and sometimes on the left; and which way soever he turned himself, they flew off as so many deer from before a lion. His sister, Zeinab, the daughter of Fatemah, came out and said, 'I wish the heavens would fall upon the earth!' Then, turning to Amer, she asked him if he could stand by and see Hosein killed? — whereupon the tears trickled down his beard, and he turned away his face from her. Nobody offered to meddle with him till Shamer set them on again, with reproaches and curses. One of them, for fear of Shamer, threw a lance at him, but made it fall short, because he would not hurt him. At last, one wounded him upon the hand, a second upon the neck, whilst a third thrust him through with a spear. When

he was dead, they cut his head off; and when he was searched, there were found upon him three-and-thirty wounds, and four-and-thirty bruises. Then they rode their horses over Hosein's body, backwards and forwards, so often, that they trampled it into the very ground.

"He was killed on the tenth day of the month Moharram, in the year of the Hegira 61. This date is so celebrated among the Persians, that, to this very day, they call it the *Day of Hosein*. The memory of, and mourning for, his death, are still annually celebrated among them; so that it causes an implacable hatred between the successors of the family of Ommiyah and Abbas, and all those that do not look upon Abu-beker, Omar, and Othman to have been usurpers, and Ali the only rightful and lawful successor of Mahomet."

Such was the end of Hosein, or Hassan, the only caliph of the family of the Prophet. He was succeeded by a long line of chiefs of the houses of Ommiyah and Al Abbas. For a long period, Bagdad was the residence and capital of these sovereigns, who carried their conquering armies over a great part of Asia, laid the foundation of the present Barbary states, and established the Moorish dynasty in Spain. Moztasem Billah, who came to the throne in 1242, may be regarded as the last of the caliphs. About this period they yielded their dominion to the Turks, and the empire of the Saracens, which had existed for nearly six hundred years, and has furnished one of the most wonderful chapters in the history of mankind, was terminated forever.

HAROUN AL RASCHID.

No reader of the "Thousand and One Nights" can have forgotten Haroun Al Raschid, the caliph of Bagdad, who encountered so many adventures in perambulating the streets of his capital, disguised, in company with his vizier, and his black slave Mesrour. This monarch, under whom the Arabian empire at-

tained its highest point of splendor and prosperity, was the second son of the Caliph Al Mohdi, and distinguished himself in arms at an early age. He commanded an expedition sent by his father against the Greeks, in which he laid waste several Asiatic provinces of the empire, spread alarm to Constantinople itself, and compelled the Empress Irene to purchase peace by a tribute.

His father appears to have designed him for his immediate successor, to the prejudice of his elder brother, and, in token of this, gave him a beautiful ruby ring, which he had worn himself. On the death of Al Mohdi, however, his elder son, Al Hadi, took quiet possession of the throne; and one of his first acts was to demand, of his brother, the caliph's ring. Haroun was so incensed at this, that, in the presence of the eunuch who bore the message, he pulled the ring off his finger, and threw it into the Tigris. Hadi reigned but a short time, and Haroun succeeded to the caliphate in the year 786, at the age of twenty-four. He ordered a number of divers immediately to search for the lost ring, which they soon found. This was considered a prognostic that the new caliph would be blessed with a long and prosperous reign.

Haroun received the popular surname of Al Raschid, or the Just, from the uprightness and impartiality which characterized his administration; although his justice, like that of most Oriental sovereigns, was sullied by occasional acts of violence and caprice. He was the most powerful monarch of his race, and his reign was signalized by many warlike exploits. He made eight invasions of the Greek empire. On the deposition of

Irene, and the accession of Nicephorus, in 802, the new emperor refused to pay tribute to the caliph, and intimated, by a present of swords, delivered with an epistle, that he was ready to trust his cause to the decision of arms. Haroun ordered the swords to be fixed together in the ground, and, drawing his cimeter, cut asunder the cords that bound them at a single stroke. He then dictated the following characteristic epistle: "In the name of the most merciful God, Haroun Al Raschid, Commander of the Faithful, to Nicephorus, the Roman dog. I have read thy letter, O thou son of an unbelieving mother! Thou shalt not hear, but thou shalt behold, my reply." He immediately marched a strong army into Syria, laid the country waste with fire and sword, and ravaged the Island of Cyprus. After a long war, Nicephorus found himself so much weakened that he was glad to purchase peace by agreeing to pay an increased tribute.

Haroun distinguished himself by his patronage of learning, which was exercised with so munificent a spirit, that his court at Bagdad became the resort of the most celebrated literary characters of that day. He caused many Latin and Greek authors to be translated into Arabic, and dispersed copies of their works over the whole empire. He first made the Iliad and Odyssey known to the East. In the possession of wealth, and the magnificence of his court, he surpassed all other monarchs of his time. He sent a splendid embassy to Charlemagne, which, among other presents, bore him a superb tent, a water-clock, and the keys of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, in token of a permission to the European pilgrims to visit that city.

In 792, a rebellion was excited in the province of Deylau, by Yahia, a descendant of Ali, who declared himself caliph. Haroun sent an army against him, and, by artful negotiations, succeeded in persuading the rebel leader to submit, under a solemn promise of security for his life and liberty. This promise, however, was violated; and Haroun first imprisoned him, and then put him to death — an action which greatly sullied his character among his own subjects, and seriously impaired his claim to the title of "just." As an atonement for this crime, he undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca on foot, the pains of which he is said to have alleviated somewhat in the manner of the Christian pilgrim who boiled the peas which he put in his shoes — Haroun had the road *carpeted* before him.

This exhibition of religious zeal conciliated the devotees. The deference which he habitually paid to the doctrines of religion was conspicuous; and it is recorded that one Malek, the founder of an orthodox Mahometan sect, having been sent for by the caliph in order to instruct his sons, returned for answer that knowledge would not wait upon any person, but must itself be waited upon. Haroun confessed that this was just, and gave directions that his children should attend their master at the public school. On one of his marches, a woman came to him with a complaint that some of his soldiers had pillaged her house. "Hast thou not read in the Koran," asked the caliph, "that, where princes pass, their armies make desolation?" — "True," replied the woman, "but I have also read, in the same book, that the houses of those princes shall be made desolate, for their injustice." Haroun was

struck with the answer, and ordered full restitution to be made to the petitioner.

The ruin of the family of the Barmecides furnishes a striking example of the despotic rigor which was a part of Haroun's character. Giaffar, one of this family, was the caliph's vizier and chief favorite. Haroun, in consequence of this close intimacy, permitted him, contrary to the custom of the East, to see his sister Abbasa. A mutual passion arose between them, and the consequences drew down the vengeance of the monarch upon the whole family of the vizier. Giaffar was publicly executed; his father was thrown into a prison, where he soon died, and the property of the whole race was confiscated. Some authors ascribe this catastrophe to the jealousy entertained by the caliph of their great riches and influence. He issued a decree forbidding, on pain of death, all mention of the names or actions of the Barmecides. But, as an evidence that he was not incapable of just and generous sentiments when reflection was not disturbed by passion, the following anecdote is related: — One day an old man took his station in front of a house which had been abandoned by this family, and was in a state of desolation. Here, he attracted great crowds by boldly haranguing in favor of that unhappy race, and bestowing high panegyrics on the deeds of their great men. The caliph, hearing of this, ordered the man to be brought before him, and sentenced him to die for treating his edict with contempt. He received the sentence with calmness, and only desired leave to speak two words to the caliph before his execution. This being granted, the two words for which he had stipulated were

drawn out into a long discourse, in which he spoke with so much eloquence of the obligations he was under to the unfortunate family, that the caliph listened with patience to the end, and not only granted him his life, but made him a present of a gold plate from his own table. The man, having received this valuable gift from the monarch's hands, prostrated himself on the ground, according to the Eastern custom, and said, by way of acknowledgment, "See here a new favor which I have received from the house of Barmec!"—a phrase which passed into a proverb, and circulated throughout the East.

The epoch of the reign of this monarch has, in the remembrance of the Mahometan nations, become the golden age of their dominion. The wealth and the adopted luxury of the conquered nations had given to social life that refinement, and to the court of Bagdad that splendor, of which so lively pictures are exhibited in many of the tales of the Arabian Nights. Flourishing towns sprang up in every part of the empire. Traffic by land and sea increased with the luxury of the wealthy classes; and Bagdad rivalled even Constantinople in magnificence. Haroun Al Raschid attained, perhaps, as near the summit of prosperity as any man who ever wore a crown; and his popular fame has descended to the present day. After a return from an expedition which he had undertaken to quiet some commotions in Persia, he was seized with great dejection of spirits, and an apprehension of soon falling into some mortal distemper. He had partially recovered from this, and was marching towards the provinces beyond the Oxus, when he experienced a second attack, and

was obliged to abandon the enterprise. He retired to Tous, in Khorassan, where he died in October, 808, at the age of forty-seven, having reigned twenty-three years. It can only have been in comparison with other Eastern princes, that he was extolled for his clemency; but in munificence, in love of learning, and liberality to poets and men of letters, and in courage and enterprise, he has had few superiors

THE TURKS.

Although the capital of the Turkish empire stands upon European territory, the history of this Asiatic people properly appertains to this volume of our work The Turks of the present day, or Osman-

lees, are a branch of a more ancient family of Turks, who constituted a tribe dependent on the Tartars, and were the most needy and despised of all the slaves of the Great Khan. They first inhabited the Altaian Mountains, and wrought the iron which the mines in that quarter afforded. Under a bold and ambitious leader, they at length sallied from this mountainous region, and became an independent horde. Ere long, they had acquired sufficient strength and importance to find favor at the imperial court of China, and their leader married a princess of that country. Their conquests afterwards became so extensive, that they obtained the supremacy in Tartary, and reduced nearly the whole north of Asia to their sway.

At what period they first became known to the Western nations, cannot be satisfactorily ascertained; but it was probably in the fourth or fifth century. At this time they were divided into various tribes, a circumstance which causes great confusion in their history. Osman may be regarded as the founder of the Turkish empire: he is the ancestor of the present reigning dynasty, and has given his name to the nation, which has been designated, from him, Osmanlee, or Ottoman.

Oriental history is full of dreams and portents, which are made to announce great events. The dream of Osman, evidently the fiction of a later age, though it may cast suspicion upon the historic veracity of the Turkish writers, gives no unfavorable impression of their poetical invention. It is to the following purport. At midnight, he saw himself, and the sheik, his host, stretched out at length. The moon rose, and as she waxed she inclined toward Osman; at her full she

sunk, and concealed herself in his bosom. Then from his loins sprung up a tree, which grew in beauty and strength, and spread its boughs wider and farther over earth and sea, stretching its shadow even to the utmost horizon of the three parts of the world. Under it stood mountains like Caucasus and Atlas, Taurus and Hæmus, as the four pillars of the boundless leafy pavilion. Like the four rivers from the roots of the tree of Paradise streamed forth the Tigris and Euphrates, the Nile and the Danube. Barks covered the rivers, fleets the seas, corn the fields, and woods the mountains. From the latter sprang fountains in fertilizing abundance, and murmured through the rose and cypress thickets of these Eden-like lawns and groves. From the valleys towered up cities with domes and cupolas, with pyramids and obelisks, with minarets and turrets. On the summits of these glittered the crescent. From their galleries the muezzin's call to prayer sounded through the concert of a thousand nightingales and a thousand parrots, who sung and chattered in the cooling shade, the countless leaves of which were formed like swords. Then arose a prevailing wind, and drove all the points of the swords against the cities, and particularly against the imperial capital of Constantine, which, at the union of two seas and two continents, like a diamond set between two sapphires and two emeralds, forms the most precious centre-stone of the ring of universal empire.

This dream was, of course, explained to mean that the descendants of Osman should reign over the world; and, as the Koran teaches that "good dreams come from God," the warriors of his tribe joyfully shed their

blood to prove the truth of the words of the prophet. Accompanied by a chosen band of men, he was the terror of the Greeks and the Mongols of Persia. Osman and the three bravest of his companions appear, in Turkish history, like King Arthur and his knights, or Charlemagne and his paladins. They took by storm the strong fortress of Melangena, which received the Turkish name of Kara-hissar, or the Black Castle, and Osman was invested with a fief by Sultan Aladdin, in 1289. His power increased gradually by conquests from the Greeks, and afterwards from some petty Seljukian princes in Asia Minor.

A dark and true prognostic of the character of Turkish greatness was exhibited by its famous ancestor. The first foundation of the Ottoman empire was cemented by the blood of civil strife. The inclination of the tribe to place itself rather under the rule of the prudent and experienced Dindar, the brother of their chief Ortoghrul, than under that of his impetuous and enterprising son, awakened the jealousy of the ambitious Osman. The endeavor of the elder to arrest, by the more timid counsels of age, the daring schemes of the younger warrior, wrought his anger to the highest pitch. Osman's fiery spirit would not brook the icy prudence of the gray-headed man; in wrath he opposed, says the Turkish historian, "the arrows of his words with the arrow of the bow." The uncle fell, shot dead by his nephew, — a bloody lesson for all who should dare to oppose the fixed determination of their lord. Edris, justly esteemed the most valuable historian of the Turks, at the beginning of his work, openly declares that, passing over in silence all that is rep-

rehensible, he will hand down to posterity only the glorious deeds of the royal race of Osman; yet he relates among these achievements the murder of Dindar. If such deeds are reckoned, by the panegyrists of the Osmanlees, as among their praiseworthy actions, what are we to think of those which cannot be approved, and over which their historians have thrown the curtain of silence?

In the long gallery of domestic assassinations which leads us through the subsequent reigns of the Ottoman princes, the murder of Dindar appears but as the bloody threshold; and it is melancholy to remark that this sanguinary usage was one of the great conservative principles of the monarchy. If we look to the histories of all the other Mahometan or Asiatic empires, we find them overthrown, or rent asunder, either during the life or at the death of the reigning sovereign, by the insurrections or the conflicts of the sons of many mothers. This is the inalienable inheritance of polygamy in the harem. In the Ottoman succession alone we find the uncontested sceptre, for many generations, descending in an uninterrupted line. "An Amurath an Amurath succeeds." A deep religious reverence sanctified the race of Osman, as formerly it did the older caliphs of the holy line of the Prophet; and as long as that race was confined to a single pedigree, the throne stood in stern and solitary security. Even the pretorian turbulence of the janizaries shrunk in awe from an act of insurrection which might interrupt forever the sacred line of descent, and make it necessary to summon a new dynasty to the throne. The head of the vizier thrown

over the walls of the seraglio appeased their wrath, and they dared not lift their rebellious voices or their sacrilegious hands against the power or the person of the sultan. But no sooner had timidity or humanity broken through this established policy of Turkish succession, no sooner was the old law of fratricide abrogated, than we begin to read of the sultan's being insulted by his ungovernable soldiery, compelled to abdicate, and, of course, suffering the inevitable fate of a deposed Asiatic sovereign. The startling truth, however revolting to humanity, cannot be called in question; the sanguinary regulation which we have mentioned contributed to the stability and perpetuity of the Turkish empire.

The second, and still more important, secret of its greatness was the establishment of the janizaries — a standing army totally disconnected by birth, by possessions, by any common tie of citizenship, by blood, by feeling, or by interest, with the rest of the body politic. The janizary was an insulated being, who knew neither kindred nor relationship, but with his fellow-soldiers. By a cruel policy, perfectly consonant to the genius of the Turkish government, the children of Christian parents were seized and forcibly converted into soldiers, who formed what may be termed the body-guard of Mahometanism. The first armies of the Osmanlees were wild and independent Turkmans, on whom no sure reliance could be placed. "Every new-born child," says the Koran, "brings with him into the world the capacity for Islamism." — "The conquered," said Khalil the Black, "are the slaves of the conqueror; their goods, their wives, their

children, are his lawful property: by their compulsory conversion to Islam, and their enrolment as warriors in its service, their temporal and eternal welfare is secured." Following these maxims, every fifth captive was selected and trained up as a soldier; their ranks were constantly recruited by renegades, and the janizaries soon became a formidable force. They were a stern band of mutes, who performed their master's bidding, to whatever deed of blood or devastation they might be sent forth. They were like the evil genii under the magic authority of a powerful enchanter, with no feeling of humanity, equally inaccessible to fear, mercy, and remorse; an order of beings different from all around them, with nothing but the insatiable cupidity, the fierce and sanguinary passions, of soldiers of fortune. As long as the master retained the spell, they moved, in blind obedience, alike against foreign and domestic enemies, overawing the brooding spirit of insurrection, and extending, in every quarter, the bonds of conquest. The institution of this formidable power is almost coeval with the foundation of Ottoman greatness.

In 1321, the Turks crossed the Bosphorus and appeared in sight of Constantinople; but their first permanent establishment on the European continent cannot be fixed at any precise date. "Ignorant of their own history," says Gibbon, "the modern Turks confound their first and their final passage of the Hellespont, and describe the son of Orchan as a nocturnal robber, who, with eighty companions, explores, by stratagem, an unknown and hostile shore. Soliman, at the head of ten thousand horse, was transported in the vessels, and entertained as the friend, of the Greek emperor."

In fact, the Turkish account of the expedition of Soliman is a purely poetical legend. It was among the ruins of Cyzicus, which his imagination transformed into the pillared remains of an enchanted palace of the queen of Saba, by the light of the moon, that visionary temples and palaces rose out of the waters and mingled with the clouds. Voices from the deep-murmuring billows seemed to summon him to some great enterprise; and the moon, which appeared to unite both continents with a chain of silver light, reminded him of the vision of his grandsire Osman. Soliman threw himself, that very night, with forty companions, into a boat, and surprised the castle of Tzympe; but this first conquest was soon secured by the arrival of a Turkish army. Such is the legend. These poetic fables have a kind of family connection, and probably a common origin.

During the civil troubles between the Greek emperor John Cantacuzene, and his son-in-law John Palæologus, the Turks assisted the emperor, and seized the castle of Gallipoli, the key of the Dardanelles. At the death of Orchan, in 1359, the Turkish empire was divided into several provinces, which were governed by pachas. The word *pacha* is derived from the Persian, and signifies the "foot of the king." In ancient times, the ministers of the kings of Persia were called his feet, his hands, his eyes, his ears, and his tongue. Amurath I captured Adrianople, the second city of the Byzantine empire, in 1361, and established his residence there. In the following year, he conquered Philippopoli, and the terror of the Turkish name spread over Europe. Pope Urban V. preached a

crusade against the Turks; and the kings of Hungary, Bosnia, and Servia, and the prince of Wallachia, formed a league to stop their progress. Their combined forces crossed the Balkan, and marched upon Adrianople; but before they could gain sight of the towers of that city, they were totally defeated, and King Louis, of Hungary, narrowly escaped captivity.

The name of Bajazet, the son of Amurath, is more familiar to the Christian reader than that of any other Turkish sultan, except Mahomet II., the conqueror of Constantinople. The contrast between the splendid victories of Bajazet and his miserable fate, has been the subject of tragedy on more than one European stage. His triumph over the flower of Christian chivalry in the field of Nicopolis, his threat that he would feed his horse from the altar of St. Peter's, at Rome; his defeat, in the field of Angora, by Tamerlane and his army of Tartar shepherds; and the story of his imprisonment in the iron cage,— have afforded themes for brilliant description and profound discussion to many of the most eloquent modern writers. The tale of the iron cage, however, appears to be a pure fiction, and took its origin from a mistake as to the meaning of the Turkish word *kafe*, a covered litter, drawn by horses, such as usually conveys the harem of an Eastern sovereign during a journey. Bajazet died the prisoner of Tamerlane, and his death threatened the Ottoman kingdom with the usual fate of Asiatic monarchies. The succession, instead of being fixed by the will of the dying sovereign, and secured from dangerous competition by the bowstring, became the prize of successful policy and valor among the five

sons of Bajazet. Fatally for the peace of Europe, and for the cause of Christianity, the superior abilities of Mahomet II. triumphed over his four rivals, and the Byzantine empire again found itself environed by a watchful, warlike, and ambitious enemy, who reigned at once at Byrsa and Adrianople.

We have, in a preceding volume, described the siege and capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II. With the fall of the Greek empire, which the Turks consider as the fulfilment of the vision of Osman, closes the first period of their history. The next great period comprehends the further extension and consolidation of the Turkish power, till it reached its supreme point in the reign of Soliman the Magnificent. During this interval, it advanced its frontier in Europe, subdued Egypt, and extended eastward to the Euphrates. The extent of dominion, and the splendid victories and conquests of Soliman, by sea and land, throw into the shade his Western rivals, even Charles V. The humiliation of Persia, the conquests of Rhodes and Belgrade, the hardly averted capture of Vienna, the subjugation of almost the whole African coast to the Turkish arms, the naval victories of Barbarossa, made Europe almost tremble to its centre before the insatiate ambition and all-conquering arms of the Ottoman. And, while Charles V., in taking refuge in his cloister from the burden of a crown, left to his son but part of a divided empire, and that part torn by civil and religious dissensions, Soliman bequeathed to his posterity his whole unshaken empire, which only wasted away by slow degrees, and suffered the common vicissitudes incident to every edifice of human greatness. The title of the Lawgiver expresses

the high reverence of the Turks for the internal administration of their great sultan. As the patron of arts, sciences, and literature, in splendor and zeal, Soliman may vie even with the classic pontiff Leo the Tenth. Yet, after all, he was a genuine Turk, an Asiatic despot, in his greatness. The bowstring never ceased its murderous office. Of his own blood ten princes fell, and, except the reis effendi, all the highest dignities of the empire yielded up their victims, during his reign, to the bowstring or the cimeter! We are tempted to ask, Did the modern mania, entitled "office-seeking," prevail in the time of Soliman?

At this period, and for many years afterwards, the Ottoman power was considered as the superlative of every thing rich or great, politic or dangerous. Infinite numbers, valor approaching to enthusiasm, discipline surpassing every thing then known, and that steady ambition which never for a moment loses sight of its object, appeared to menace all the states of Europe with speedy ruin. It is not a little remarkable that, during the most flourishing and powerful state of the empire, the reigns of Soliman and his successor Selim, the most distinguished Ottoman statesmen and commanders were apostates from Christianity. Out of ten grand viziers during this period, eight were of that character, and the renegade pachas were of almost every nation, — Albanians, Bosnians, Italians, Hungarians, Russians, Greeks, &c. Through the united valor, cunning, and want of principle, exhibited by these apostates, and the talents, and the faculties for government, of the natives of the conquered provinces, the colossus of the Ottoman empire rose to its height, and

trampled on the necks of the nations who, with renegade and slavish spirit, preyed on their own vitals.

The gradual decline of the Ottoman power may be dated from this period. With the great body of the Turks, the pride of conquest seems early to have extinguished the spirit of enterprise, and a kind of stately indolence soon began to grow over the national character. Luxury, and the indulgence in opium, spread widely among this sensual people, and exerted a powerful influence in enervating both their minds and bodies. The first irresistible impulse of Mahometan aggression gradually ebbed away; the frontier provinces were incessantly engaged in feuds and contests with invading enemies, who constantly poured in a supply of fierce and desperate spirits. Anarchy and turbulence began to rend the very heart of the empire. The heads of grand viziers and muftis fell like poppies in the time of harvest; the sacred person of the sultan lost its awe and inviolability, and the janizaries of Constantinople openly assumed the power of deposing and electing the sovereign of the empire.

The extinction of this powerful pretorian band is one of the latest instances of the sanguinary character of the Turkish government. In the beginning of the reign of the late Sultan Mahmoud, the janizaries broke out into a dreadful insurrection, which lasted for three days. At last, the sultan determined to put them down effectually; and, having matured his plan for several years, he practised a stratagem to excite them to a revolt, in order that he might have a plausible pretext for cutting them off. He gained over their principal officers, and issued an order that every division of the

soldiers should furnish a quota of men to be drilled and disciplined according to the European fashion. This, as he had foreseen, exasperated them, at once, to rise in rebellion. They assembled in the square of the Atmeidan, turned their soup-kettles bottom upwards, the established signal of mutiny, meaning that they would no longer eat the sultan's meat, and, invoking the name of their tutelar saint, began to attack and plunder the houses of their enemies. But the sultan was fully prepared for the outbreak; and, assembling the muftis and the ulemas in the mosque of Achmet, they pronounced a curse, and a sentence of eternal dissolution, on the body of the janizaries. The sacred standard of Mahomet was unfurled, and a general attack on the revolters began. Cooped up in narrow streets, they were for the most part mowed down by grape-shot, and the remainder were despatched by the musket and cimeter, or burned in their barracks. About 25,000 janizaries perished in this massacre: a few concealed themselves, or were exiled into Asia, and the janizaries, as a body, ceased to exist. This took place in June, 1825.

With the extinction of the janizaries begins a new era in Turkish history. The insurrection of the Greeks had already commenced, and their final independence was a fatal blow to the Ottoman power. The Turkish navy was destroyed in 1827, at Navarino, by the combined fleets of England, France, and Russia. A short time after, the Russian army, under Diebitsch, crossed the Balkan, defeated the Turkish army at Shumla, captured Adrianople, and approached nearly to the capital. Negotiation, and the cession of territory, saved

Constantinople from capture. The empire has become weaker and weaker every day since. Mehemet Ali, in Egypt, has founded a power, in his pachalik, superior to that of Turkey, and which is but nominally dependent upon the sultan. The Turkish empire now totters upon its base.

MAHMOUD OF GHIZNI.

One of the greatest of the Mahometan princes was Mahmoud of Ghizni, or Gazna, who reigned in the eastern province of Persia in the eleventh century. His father, Subuctageen, unmindful of the superior right as well as character of Mahmoud, his eldest son, who, at the time of his death, was employed in the government of Khorassan, bequeathed his kingdom to Ismail; who, being constantly at court, had probably won upon the weakness of his aged parent so far as to induce him to commit this impolitic act. Ismail attempted to confirm his power by a profuse expenditure of his father's treasures, which, at his death, he scattered, with an indiscriminate hand, among the soldiery; but when Mahmoud advanced, they deserted the weak Ismail, who, after a vain attempt at resistance in the city of Ghizni, was compelled to throw himself on the clemency of his brother. Mahmoud had anxiously sought to avoid this unnatural contest: he had pointed out his claims as senior, his means of establishing them, and had even proposed a division of territory; but the vain and infatuated prince would listen to no terms, and precipitated his own ruin. In his conduct to his captive brother, Mahmoud considered more what was due to himself than what his prisoner merited; and Ismail,

though deprived of liberty, was treated through life with humanity and indulgence.

To detail the actions of Mahmoud, would fill a volume. He succeeded to the great power of his father at a ripe age, when his character was matured by experience, both in war and government. His ruling passions were devotion to religion, and love of glory. They had become more ardent from restraint, and blazed forth, on his accession to the throne, with a splendor which, to use the words of a Mahometan author, "filled the whole world with terror and admiration." In his first two expeditions to India, he was completely successful; he not only defeated his enemies, but established his government over almost the whole of that country known by the name of the Punjaub. Jypaul, who had opposed Subuctageen, took the field against his son; but his army was defeated, and the superstitious but patriotic prince determined, by an heroic sacrifice of his own life, to propitiate the gods, and save his country from ruin. He delivered over the government to his son; and, mounting a funeral pile, prayed that his death amid the flames might expiate those sins which, he conceived, had drawn the divine vengeance on his unhappy kingdom. This conduct was characteristic of that devotion to the religion and usages of their ancestors which distinguishes the higher classes of the Hindoos. Mahmoud advanced into India, destroying temples and idols in his progress; but his desire of fame as a breaker of images did not divert him from seizing the wealth of those whom he had vanquished. We are told by eastern writers that, on his return to Ghizni, he celebrated a festival, at which

he displayed, to the admiring and astonished inhabitants, golden thrones, magnificently ornamented, constructed of the plunder, and consisting of five thousand pounds' weight of gold and silver plate; two hundred and eighty pounds of pure gold, fourteen thousand pounds of silver, and a hundred and forty pounds of set jewels.

In another invasion, he obtained a spoil so immense, that his own share amounted to two millions of dollars, fifty-three thousand captives, and three hundred and fifty elephants, besides an immense treasure in jewels. He now appeared to be sated with conquest, and bent on enjoyment. Part of the wealth which he had accumulated was laid out in embellishing his capital. The nobles imitated the example of their king, and Ghizni soon rivalled, in the beauty and magnitude of its public and private edifices, the proudest cities of the East. A grand mosque which Mahmoud erected surpassed every other structure of that age. The beauty of the marble of which it was built, and the superior style of the architecture, were not more admirable than the richness of the carpets and golden chandeliers with which it was ornamented; and the vanity of the monarch was flattered by hearing this favorite edifice called by the lofty, though profane, title of the "Celestial Bride." He sent an account of his victories, written in verse, to the caliph of Bagdad, with a variety of valuable presents; and the commander of the Faithful did not disdain to bear incense to the hero of that religion of which he was the spiritual head. The poetic eulogy was ordered to be publicly read at Bagdad, and all means were used which

could stimulate the pride and zeal of the conqueror to further exertions in the cause of the Mahometan faith.

In Mahmoud's twelfth and last expedition to India, he laid siege, in the year 1024, to the city and castle of Somnauth, in the province of Guzzerat. Somnauth was, at that period, the most celebrated resort of idolatrous devotees, in the south of Hindostan. The image here adored, which gave name to the city and the tract around it, seemed to claim preëminence over all that were worshipped throughout the whole country, for the different rajahs of that region are said to have bestowed two thousand villages, with their territories, for the support of its vast establishment, and the priests who constantly attended at his temple amounted to above two thousand. Of the temple itself, the most extravagant relations are given by the Eastern writers, both in respect to its surprising magnitude, and the profusion of gold and gems with which it was decorated. It was situated on a peninsula, on the western coast of Hindostan, not far from Diu, where the Portuguese formed one of their earliest establishments. The lofty roof of the temple was supported by fifty-six pillars overlaid with plates of gold, and incrusted at intervals with rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones. One pendent lamp alone illuminated the spacious fabric, the light of which, reflected back from innumerable jewels, spread a brilliant lustre throughout the whole temple. In the midst stood Somnauth himself, an idol consisting of one entire stone, fifty cubits in height, forty-seven of which were buried in the ground; and on that spot, according to the Brahmins, he had been worshipped between four and five thou-

sand years. This image was washed every morning and evening with fresh water brought from the Ganges, at the distance of twelve hundred miles. Around the dome were dispersed thousands of images, in gold and silver, of various shapes and dimensions, so that on this spot, as in a grand pantheon, seemed to be assembled all the deities venerated in Hindostan.

Mahmoud, being informed of the riches collected at Somnauth, as well as of the tremendous menace of the idol if he approached that hallowed shrine, was determined to put the power of the god to instant trial. Leaving Ghizni with an immense army, and advancing, by the way of Moultan and Ajmere, through two frightful deserts, where nothing but the most prudent foresight saved his army from being annihilated by famine, he arrived without opposition before the walls of the sacred city. On the lofty battlements of the temple were assembled an innumerable multitude in arms, when a herald, approaching, denounced the vengeance of the god, and informed the invaders that their idol, Somnauth, had drawn them together on that spot, that he might crush them in a moment, and avenge, by one dreadful and general ruin, the destruction of the gods of Hindostan. In spite of these awful imprecations, Mahmoud commenced an immediate and vigorous assault, and drove the defenders from the walls, which the besiegers instantly mounted. The Hindoos, who had retreated into the temple, and prostrated themselves before their idol in devout expectation of seeing their enemy discomfited by the signal and instantaneous vengeance of heaven, finding their expectations vain, made a desperate effort for the preserva-

tion of the place. Rushing in a body on the assailants, they repulsed them with great slaughter, and as fast as fresh forces ascended the walls, pushed them headlong down with their spears. This advantage they maintained for two days, fighting like men who had devoted themselves to death, which their belief in the metempsychosis assured them was only a passage to felicity and glory.

At the end of two days, a vast army of idolaters, coming to their relief, drew the attention of Mahmoud from the siege to his own immediate safety. These men fought with a heroism and desperation proportioned to their superstition; but the victory was at length declared for Mahmoud. Five thousand Hindoos lay slaughtered on the field. The garrison of Somnauth, after this defeat, giving up all for lost, made a sally from a gate looking toward the sea, and embarked, to the number of four thousand, in boats, intending to proceed to Ceylon; but they were pursued by the troops of Mahmoud, who captured or sunk the greater part of them. Somnauth submitted; and Mahmoud made his triumphal entry into the place. Approaching the temple, he was struck with the majestic grandeur of that ancient structure; but when he entered it, and saw the enormous treasures which it contained, he was filled with astonishment and exultation. In a paroxysm of Mahometan zeal, he smote off the nose of the idol with his mace, and ordered the image to be demolished. While his men were proceeding to obey his commands, a crowd of Brahmins, apparently frantic at this indignity offered to their idol tendered an immense sum in gold, as the ransom of

the deity. Mahmoud's officers seconded this petition; they urged that the demolition of the idol would not remove idolatry from the walls of Somnauth, but that such a sum of money, distributed among true believers, would produce great benefits. The sultan acknowledged the truth of their remark, but declared that he would never become a seller of idols. The image was, therefore, dashed in pieces, and a multitude of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, of the most enormous value, were disclosed within the hollow cavity of the idol — a fact which not only astonished the beholders, but fully explained the zealous liberality of the Brahmins in the offer which they made for its ransom.

After a long career marked by a continual series of conquests and successes, Mahmoud died, in the year 1028. His life terminated in a magnificent edifice, which he had vainly called the "Palace of Felicity." Shortly before he expired, he took a last and mournful view of his army, his court, and the enormous treasures which he had accumulated by his unparalleled successes. He is said to have contemplated them with a sigh, which may have proceeded from a sense of the vanity of all earthly glory, or from a reluctance to abandon his vast wealth and power. The character of this famous prince has been handed down to us by prejudiced Mahometan authors: justly considering him as one of the most celebrated among those heroes who have propagated their faith by the sword, they depict him as worthy of every praise. There can be no doubt, at least, of his great talents as a warrior. But his conduct to Firdusi, as related in another part of this volume, shows that he was capricious and destitute

of good faith. And even his love of conquest was rendered more terrible by his cruel bigotry. In every country that he subdued, the horrors of war were increased by those of religious persecution. The waste and desolation occasioned by his conquests excited the commiseration of his own subjects; and there is an Eastern tale which describes the vizier of the sultan as reminding him of this, in a delicate, though at the same time sarcastic, manner. The vizier, according to the story, pretended to understand the language of birds; and one day, walking with his master in the neighborhood of the city, they espied a couple of owls, apparently in close conversation. The sultan wished to know the subject of their discourse: the vizier pretended to listen, and then replied in the following manner: "These two old owls are making a matrimonial contract for their two children: the mother of the bridegroom demands a hundred ruined villages, as the dowry of the bride; to which the other replies, 'Very well; God grant a long life to Sultan Mahmoud, and we shall never want for ruined villages!'"

History has recorded one memorable proof of Mahmoud's resolute justice. A poor man complained that a young noble of his court came constantly to his dwelling, at night, and turned him out of his house and bed. The sultan bade him give him notice the next time this occurred. He did so, and Mahmoud went with him to the house. When he reached it, he put out a lamp that was burning, and, having found the offender, struck off his head with one blow of his cimeter. He then called for a light, and, viewing the corpse, fell upon his

knees, and returned thanks to Heaven; after which he bade the astonished husband bring him water, and drank an immoderate quantity. "You are surprised at my actions," said Mahmoud; "but know that, since you informed me of the outrage you had suffered, I have neither eaten, drunk, nor slept. I conceived that no person, except one of my sons, would dare openly to commit so outrageous a crime. I resolved to do justice, and I extinguished the lamp, that my feelings as a father might not prevent me from doing my duty as a sovereign. My prayers were a thanksgiving to the Almighty, when I saw that I had not been compelled to slay one of my own offspring; and I drank, as you saw, like a man dying from thirst."

ZINGIS KHAN.

The ancient seats of the Huns, the Turks, and the Tartars, between China, Siberia, and the Caspian Sea, were occupied, in the twelfth century, by many pastoral tribes of the Tartar family; these were united and led to conquest by Zingis or Gengis Khan, who formed the vast project of subjugating the whole of Asia.

His original name was Temugin. He was the son of a khan, or chief, and, after unexampled vicissitudes, obtained, at the age of forty-nine, a complete victory over a host of enemies who had combined to ruin him. He was not only considered by his own tribe as their deliverer from the tyranny of the chief whose arms he had defeated, but was deemed, by a great majority of the khans of Tartary, as worthy of the high dignity of khagan, or emperor. To confer this authority, a *couroultai*, or national council, was assembled. It met at the spot of Temugin's birth; and that chief, after addressing the khans in an eloquent harangue, seated himself on a black felt, or *nummud*, which, dignified by his subsequent fortune, was long preserved by his successors, and considered by them almost as a sacred relic. On this seat he was reminded of the importance of the duties to which he was called, by an orator who spoke in the name of the nation. After this speech,

seven khans lifted up Temugin, and carried him to a high throne in the midst of the assembly. The moment he was seated on this, he was saluted as khagan; and not only the chiefs, but all present, pledged obedience to their sovereign by bending their knees nine times before him. The air now resounded with shouts of joy; and Temugin, who now assumed the name of Zingis Khan, assured his voluntary subjects that he would repay the great honor which they had bestowed upon him by making their name famous in the farthest region of the earth.

The rules which this extraordinary monarch established, for the government of his country and his army, must not be passed unnoticed. His ordinances for the civil administration of his territories were, perhaps, indifferently observed; but his military regulations formed the basis of the only discipline that has ever been introduced into the armies of his successors. The majority of his subjects were idolaters; but all were commanded to obey one supreme and all-powerful Creator; and those who subscribed to this leading tenet were allowed to follow what mode of worship they thought proper. He ordained, in the true spirit of a ruler of Tartary, that peace should never be made with a nation on whom the Tartars had once made war, until it was subdued. Every subject of the khagan was compelled to serve the state. Those who were not soldiers were obliged to work a certain number of days annually for the benefit of the country; and one day of labor in each week was the right of the emperor. No Tartar could employ a person of his own nation as a domestic servant — a regulation which, while it nour-

ished a proud spirit, and increased the number of soldiers, forced the Tartars to take care of their captives for the sake of employing them in menial offices. The army of Zingis, which exceeded 600,000 men, was never idle. A campaign against an enemy was less harassing than the exercise which he gave them in hunting, when not engaged in military service. By one of his laws, no person was allowed to kill game, of any description, from March till October, the season when the grand hunt commenced.

This diversion was exhibited upon the most extensive scale. A central plain was fixed upon, and the army drawn up around it, in a ring of more than a hundred miles in diameter. This immense circle was gradually contracted, and the greatest care was taken to cover the whole country, so as to drive the game towards one point. As they approached this, the ranks closed, and every effort was used to prevent the multitude of animals from escaping, which was the more difficult, as the soldiers were not allowed to kill them. When all was duly prepared, the emperor erected his throne upon an eminence from which he could survey the entire plain; and every tribe was allowed to send some of its bravest youth, who displayed before him their courage and skill in combats with the most furious of the wild beasts. Zingis sometimes amused himself with the chase, and at other times allowed the princes of the blood to dispute, in the attack of the lion or the tiger, the prize of valor with the lowest of his subjects. The army was usually engaged in this hunt during the whole winter; and, while the severity of the season inured his troops to fatigue, Zingis had an opportunity to judge of the

skill and courage of his officers and soldiers. When the carnage had been considerable, some of the youngest princes advanced to his throne, and, kneeling before him, solicited his mercy for the surviving game. Their petition was granted; at a signal, the army opened its ranks, and the affrighted animals fled towards their native plains and mountains.

Zingis, after reducing the whole of Tartary to his authority, next turned his arms against the vast empire of China. He broke through the great wall, captured eighty cities, and compelled the Chinese emperor to sue for peace, and pay a tribute of gold, silk, and horses. In a second invasion, he laid siege to Pekin; the inhabitants, after suffering all the horrors of famine, and expending their ammunition, discharged ingots of gold and silver from their engines; but the Tartars captured the city by introducing a mine into its centre, and setting fire to the palace, which burned for more than thirty days. Zingis added the five northern provinces of China to his empire. With an army of 700,000 Tartars and Moguls, he then marched against the sultan of Kharizm, and in the vast plains, on the north of the Jaxartes, he encountered that monarch, who led to battle 400,000 soldiers. The Kharizmian forces were defeated with the loss of 160,000 men, that monarchy was overthrown, and the sultan died, abandoned by all his followers, on a desolate island in the Caspian Sea.

The whole of Persia was either subdued or overrun by the arms of Zingis, whose dominions, before his death, extended from the Indus to the Euxine, from the Volga to China, and from the shores of the Persian

Gulf to the chilling wastes of Siberia. The ravages committed by his armies were terrible ; and these, as described by Mahometan authors, are still exaggerated, on account of the abhorrence with which they regarded a prince who detested their religion. After Bokhara was taken, these authors relate that pious and learned men were compelled to perform the most menial offices for their conquerors. " The Moguls," says one of these writers, " made stables of the libraries. All the books in them were destroyed ; and, by an unexampled profanation, the leaves of the holy Koran were used for litter to their horses, who trampled on the sacred sentences of Mahomet."

We are told that Zingis lived to regret the dreadful desolation which he had made, and proposed to rebuild many of the cities that had been ruined by his victorious arms. Age and infirmity, however, warned him that his end was approaching. He assembled all his family, and earnestly exhorted them to live in concord. If we may credit the Mahometan authors, he either invented or applied, on this occasion, the popular illustration of the effect of union by the strength of a bundle of sticks, the experiment being appropriately made with a quiver of arrows. All promised obedience, and Zingis Khan expired at the age of seventy-three, in the year 1226, having lived to complete the vast projects which he had formed early in life, and to bestow upon each of his four principal sons a great kingdom. With his last breath he enjoined upon them to complete the conquest of the Chinese empire. The subjugation of Hindostan, by the Moguls, was reserved to a later period, for the house of Timour.

TIMOUR, OR TAMERLANE.

TIMOUR.

TAMERLANE, or Timour, one of the most celebrated of Oriental conquerors, was born in the year 1335, in the village of Sebz, near Samarcand. His ancestors were hereditary chiefs of that district, and derived their descent from a family connected with the imperial line of Zingis Khan. At the time of the birth of Timour, the country was in a state of anarchy, and he became a soldier at the age of twelve years. The khans of Cashgar, with an army of Calmucks, invaded the kingdom of Transoxiana; and Timour, having lost his father, put himself at the head of his followers, to free his country from the invaders. In one of his battles he received a wound in the thigh which lamed him for life, in consequence of which he was called *Timour lenk*, or Timour the lame, which Europeans corrupted into Tamerlane. In his first struggles against the Calmucks he was unsuccessful; his followers deserted him, one by one, and he was obliged to retreat to the desert with his wife, seven companions, and four horses. During two months he was plunged in a loathsome dungeon, from which he made his escape, swam the broad and rapid stream of the Jaxartes, and led, for months, the life of a vagrant and an outlaw. At length he was joined by a few of his countrymen, and we will tran-

scribe his own simple and pathetic relation of this period of his career: —

"When my wounds were healed, I determined to proceed to the mountains, on the frontiers of Balkh, and there collect forces. I set off with forty horsemen, being all the army I had. But they were all brave men, the sons of heroes; and I gave praise to God, that, in my distress, such men came, without purse or scrip, to follow me, and do my bidding. And I said to myself, 'God Almighty doeth great things for me, seeing he hath made such men, who are my equals, to be my servants.' Thus I proceeded toward the mountains; and Suddeuk Burlaus, who was wandering in search of me, chanced to meet me by the way, with fifteen horsemen, and joined my troop; I took this rencounter for a happy omen. We passed our time in hunting, and proceeded onward. One day I discovered a body of men, standing on a hill; others joined them, and their numbers continued to increase. I halted, and sent some of my men to learn who they were. My men went among them, and came back with the intelligence. 'It is Kurramchee Bahaudur, thy old servant, who, with a hundred horsemen, has left the army of Jitteh, and is wandering in search of thee.' I bowed in gratitude to Almighty God, and sent orders for Kurramchee to approach. He came and kneeled before me, and kissed my feet. I received him with affection, and placed my own turban on his head. Then I set out for the valley of Arsuff. When I reached the valley, I pitched my tents; the next day I mounted my horse and entered the valley. In the middle of the valley was a hill, where the air was very delightful; I

went thither, and fixed my abode upon the spot; my men pitched their tents around me.

"On that night, which was a holy night, I kept watch, and when the morning broke I was at prayer. In the midst of my supplications I shed tears, and implored the Almighty to deliver me from that wandering life. I had not yet completed my devotions, when a number of people appeared afar off, passing along in a line with the hill. I mounted my horse and advanced toward them to know what men they were. They were in all seventy horsemen. And I hailed them, asking, 'Warriors! who are ye?' And they answered, 'We are the servants of the emir Timour; we wander in search of him, and, lo! we find him not.' I replied, 'I also am one of Timour's servants; how say ye, if I shall be your guide, and lead you to him?' Then one of them put his horse to his speed, and galloped to his leaders, saying, 'We have found a guide who can lead us to the emir Timour.' And the leaders drew back the reins of their horses, and ordered that I should appear before them. They were three troops, and when their eyes fell on me, they were overwhelmed with joy; and they alighted from their horses, and came and kneeled, and kissed my stirrup. I also came down from my horse, and took each of them in my arms, and I put my turban on the head of Tughulluk; and my girdle, rich in jewels, and wrought with gold, I bound on the loins of Ameer Sife; and my coat I put upon Toubak, the three captains of this troop. They wept, and I wept also. When the hour of prayer came, we prayed together. Then we mounted our horses and came to my dwelling, where I made a feast to all my people"

Thus the trusty bands of Timour were increased by the accession of the bravest of the native tribes. He led them against a superior foe, and, after some vicissitudes of war, the Calmucks were driven out of the country. At a general *couroultai*, or diet, in 1370, he was seated on the throne of Balkh, with the title of emperor. This kingdom comprises regions which may well contest the prize of fertility with the plains of Andalusia and Damascus; and, in the centre of the province of Sogdiana, in a beautiful and well-watered valley, stands Samarcand, the ancient seat of power and literature. This Timour made the capital of his empire. He proceeded to reëstablish the Mongol power, and even aspired to the dominion of the world. Persia was quickly subdued. He next excited divisions among the Golden Horde, which held Astrachan, Kazan, and the Crimea, under its sway, and reigned over the Muscovite tribes. Nothing was able to withstand the terrors of artillery, which he employed, for the first time, in those regions.

Timour penetrated on one side toward the west, and promised protection to the princes of Asia Minor, who had been oppressed by the Turkish sultans, while his grandson, Mohammed Jehangire, marched southward, crossed the Indus, and overran Hindostan. On the plains of Galatia, in Asia Minor, Timour encountered the Turkish sultan Bajazet, who, inspired by the remembrance of his fathers, and his former greatness, fought, with the fury of despair, for freedom or death. The Mongols obtained a complete victory; and, throwing a mantle over the sultan, took him alive, and brought him, in an ignominious condition, before his conqueror,

whom he had despised and insulted. The unfortunate Bajazet pined away in grief and mortification, and died a prisoner. The whole of Asia Minor was plundered and laid waste; the knights of St. John in vain opposed a resistance of fifteen days in the citadel of St. Peter, near Smyrna; the Mongols filled up the harbor, and but a few of the knights escaped. Timour erected a tower as a monument of his victory, consisting of an equal number of stones and human heads.

The conqueror now directed his march toward the east and the north-east. The Tartars of the Golden Horde, on receiving information of this movement, mounted their wild steeds, and fled into the steppes beyond the Wolga and the Uralsk. Nothing could arrest the victorious course of Timour. His insatiable ambition prompted him to an invasion of Hindostan. He advanced against Delhi, defeated the troops and elephants of Sultan Mahmoud, and made a triumphal entry into that capital, which he desolated with pillage and massacre. He vanquished also the Egyptian Mamelukes, and despatched an army of 200,000 men against the dynasty of Sing, which at that time reigned in China. His life is little more than a monotonous tale of bloodshed, the particulars of which would only shock the reader. He placed twenty-seven crowns upon his head, and commanded in thirty-five campaigns; but his wars, for the most part, were rather inroads than conquests, and he was more the scourge, than the benefactor, of mankind. If some partial disorders and some local oppressions were remedied by the sword of Timour, the remedy was far more terrible than the disease. The ground which had been occupied by flourishing

cities, was often marked by his barbarous trophies — by columns, or pyramids, of human heads. Astrachan, Carizme, Delhi, Ispahan, Bagdad, Aleppo, Damascus, Boursa, Smyrna, and a thousand others, were sacked or burnt, or utterly destroyed, in his presence, and by his troops. When he had overturned the ancient government of a country, he left it a prey to all the evils of anarchy. While preparing for the conquest of China he died, in the year 1405, in the seventy-first year of his age.

Timour has been compared to Alexander the Great, but he is far below him. His disposition was sanguinary and fanatical, and he was infected with that superstitious reverence for omens, prophecies, saints, and astrologers, which is general in the East. He aspired, however, to the fame of something more than a barbarian conqueror, and attempted to foster learning and the arts. He administered his government alone, without favorites or ministers, and its spirit was absolute and unmitigated despotism. He left a great name in the East, and the throne of the Mogul empire to his descendants.

MARCO POLO.

Marco Polo, one of the most famous and adventurous of all travellers, may be styled the Columbus of the East. He was the first man who gave to Christendom a certain and distinct account of the sea beyond China, and of the islands of Farther India. A great part of his account, although given with the most circumstantial detail, and confirmed by his most solemn asseverations as to its truth, was received by the European public with utter incredulity, and passed for a tissue of fables; but subsequent discoveries have fully established the veracity of the traveller, and shown that his most wonderful relations do not exceed the truth.

He was born in Venice, about the year 1250. His father, Nicolo, and his two uncles, Maffio and Marco, were the sons of a nobleman or patrician of that wealthy and proud city. Their rank did not prevent them from carrying on the business of merchants; for commerce was then held in high estimation at Venice, and was pursued on a grand scale by the first dignitaries of that city. Nicolo and Maffio, who appear to have been in partnership, being actuated by the adventurous spirit for which their countrymen were remarkable, embarked together on a trading voyage to

Constantinople, between which city and Venice there was an intimate connection at that period. Having disposed of their Italian merchandise, they looked round for another market in which to employ their capital, and learnt that an opening for trade might be found among the western Tartars, who, after devastating many parts of Asia and Europe, had settled on the Wolga and in the neighborhood, built cities, and assumed the forms of a regular government. They accordingly made purchases of a valuable stock of jewelry, crossed the Euxine to a port in the Crimea, and proceeded from thence to the court or camp of Barkah, the great grandson of Zingis Khan. They placed all their valuable goods in his hands, and the barbarian repaid them with princely munificence. A war between Barkah and another horde of Tartars prevented their return to Constantinople by the direct route, and they took a circuitous course, which led them round the Caspian Sea to the great city of Bokhara.

During their stay here, a Tartar nobleman became acquainted with them, and derived much pleasure from their company. He invited them to accompany him to the court of the great khan, where he assured them that they would meet with a favorable reception, and an ample compensation for the trouble of their journey. They accepted his invitation; and, after a journey of a whole year, arrived at the residence of the chief at Kemenfu, in Chinese Tartary. Kublai Khan received them favorably, and, wishing to establish a communication with the western world, of which he had but a confused knowledge, he commissioned them to proceed, as his envoys, to the pope, to whom he wrote a letter,

requesting him to send him a hundred men learned in the various sciences and arts, to instruct his people. The Polos, furnished with their credentials, returned to the west, and reached Venice in 1269, after an absence of nineteen years. Nicolo found his wife dead, but she had left him a son, Marco, who was born a few months after his departure.

Pope Clement IV. had just died, and the factions which prevailed in the sacred college caused great delay in the election of a new pontiff. After two years' residence in Italy, the Polos determined to return to Tartary, without waiting to execute Kublai Khan's commission. They took young Marco with them, and had proceeded as far as Syria, when they heard of the election of Gregory X., who happened then to be at Ptolemais, in that country. They repaired to the new pope, and conferred with him on the subject of their embassy. Gregory appointed two Dominican friars to accompany them, and they set out for Tartary in 1272; but the friars, dreading the dangers of a war which was then raging in the regions which lay in their way, proceeded only a short distance, and the three Venetians continued their journey without them. They reached the court of Kublai Khan, at Taiyuen-fu, within the present limits of China, in 1275.

The reception given them by the khan was as favorable as they had any reason to expect. After the customary prostrations, and delivery of the letters, they were desired to relate their adventures, to which he listened with much attention. He commended their zeal, and accepted with complacency the present from the pope; he received, with particular marks of

reverence, a vessel of consecrated oil from the holy sepulchre, which was sent from Jerusalem at his desire, and which he concluded, from the value set upon it by Christians, might possess extraordinary properties. Observing young Marco, he made inquiries respecting him, honored him with particular notice, took him under his protection, and gave him an appointment in his household. In this situation, he soon became distinguished for his talents, and respected by the court. He adopted the manners of the country, and acquired a competent knowledge of the four languages most in use, which seem to have been the Mongol, the Turkistan, the Mantchoo-Tartar, and the Chinese. Thus accomplished, he became a highly useful officer, and a great favorite with the khan, who employed him on services of importance in various parts of the empire, even to the distance of six months' journey. While engaged in these expeditions, he availed himself of every opportunity for collecting information respecting the countries which he visited, and the customs of the inhabitants. He made notes of every thing important or characteristic, for the information of the khan, whose curiosity on these subjects appears to have been insatiable; and it is to these notes that we are indebted for the substance of what is contained in the volume of Travels which, after his return, he was induced to publish, but which, certainly, was not in his contemplation at the time. His father and uncle were also partakers of the khan's patronage.

Marco thus describes the great city of Cambalu, the winter residence of the khan — undoubtedly Pekin, the Tartar name of which, Khan-balik, or the Imperial

City, Marco wrote down from the ear. "The multitude of inhabitants, and the number of houses in the city, as also in the suburbs, which are twelve, corresponding to the twelve gates, is greater than the mind can comprehend. To this city every thing that is most rare and valuable in all parts of the world finds its way, — more especially from India, which furnishes precious stones, pearls, drugs, and spices. The quantity of merchandise sold there exceeds the traffic of any other place ; for no fewer than a thousand carriages and packhorses, loaded with raw silk, make their entry daily, and gold tissues, and silks, of various kinds, are manufactured to an incredible extent. On the southern side of the city is the khan's vast palace, surrounded by a walled enclosure eight miles square. A mile within is another enclosure six miles square. Still farther in the interior is a third, being a mile square, with very thick walls, twenty-five feet high, and white battlements. The spaces between the walls are ornamented with handsome trees, and contain meadows in which are kept various kinds of beasts. In the centre is the palace of the great khan, surpassing in size all others ever known. The sides of the great halls and apartments are ornamented with dragons in carved work and gilt, figures of warriors, of birds and beasts, with representations of battles. The inside of the roof is contrived in such a manner that nothing but gilding and painting meets the eye. On each side of the four fronts of the palace is a grand flight of marble steps, by which you ascend from the level of the ground to the wall of marble which surrounds the building. The outside of the roof is adorned by a variety of colors,

red, green, blue, and violet. The glazing of the windows is so well wrought, and so delicate, as to have the transparency of crystal. Not far from the palace, on the northern side, is an artificial mount of earth, a hundred paces high, and a mile in circuit; it is covered with the most beautiful evergreen trees, for, whenever his majesty hears of a rare tree in any place, he causes it to be dug up, with all its roots and the earth about them, and transported by elephants to this mount. On the summit is an ornamented pavilion, and the prospect of the whole is no less ravishing than wonderful."

His description of another city is in the following words: "Upon leaving Va-giu, you pass, in the course of three days' journey, many towns, castles, and villages, all of them well inhabited and opulent. The people are idolaters, and subject to the great khan. At the end of three days, you reach the noble and magnificent city of Kin-Sai, a name that signifies 'the Celestial City,' and which it merits from its preëminence above all others in the world in grandeur and beauty, as well as from its abundant delights, which might lead an inhabitant to imagine himself in Paradise. According to common estimation, this city is a hundred miles in circuit.* Its streets and canals are extensive, and its squares and market-places are proportioned to the great size of the city, and crowded by a prodigious concourse of people. It stands between a lake of fresh and very clear water, on one side, and a wide river, on the other — the waters of which, by a number of canals, are made to run through every part of the

* Chinese miles are probably meant, which are less than a third of the English.

city. The number of bridges, of all sizes, amounts to twelve thousand. Those which cross the principal canals, and are connected with the main streets, are so lofty that vessels without their masts can pass under them, while, at the same time, horses and carts are passing over their heads. The city has ten principal squares or markets, each half a mile square, and at the distance of four miles from each other. Parallel to the main street, runs a very large canal, on the banks of which are capacious warehouses, built of stone, for the accommodation of the merchants who arrive from India and other parts. In each of the markets, on three days in every week, there is an assemblage of from forty to fifty thousand persons, with all sorts of provisions for sale. There is always abundance of wild game, and so plentiful a supply of poultry, which are bred on the lake, that, for the value of a Venetian silver groat, you may purchase a pair of geese and two pair of ducks. The inhabitants of the city are idolaters, and use paper money as currency. Both men and women have fair complexions, and are handsome. The greater part of their dress is silk, in consequence of the vast quantity of that material produced in this province. The costliness of the dress and jewels of the women cannot easily be imagined. The streets are all paved with stone and brick; and in every street are stone buildings, or towers, to which, on the breaking out of a fire, as the houses are mostly of wood, the inhabitants may remove their effects for security. Patrol watches are kept during the night, who strike the hours upon a gong.

"Near the middle of the lake are two islands, upon

each of which stands a superb building, with an incredible number of apartments, and separate pavilions. When the inhabitants of the city have occasion to celebrate a wedding, or to give a sumptuous entertainment, they resort to one of these islands, where they find ready for their purpose every article that can be required, which are provided and kept there at the common expense of the citizens. Sometimes a hundred parties are assembled here at a time ; yet all are accommodated without any difficulty. In addition to this, an immense number of pleasure-boats are kept upon the lake, having elegant cabins, in which the people amuse themselves by sailing about ; and, truly, the gratification afforded in this manner upon the water, exceeds any that can be derived from the amusements on the land. As the lake extends the whole length of the city, you have, from the boat, a view of all its grandeur and beauty, of its palaces, temples, convents, and gardens, with trees of the largest size growing down to the water's edge ; while, at the same time, you enjoy the sight of other boats of the same description, continually passing you, filled with parties in pursuit of amusement."

The above city was the capital of Southern China, under the Song dynasty. It is at present known by the name of Hang-tcheou-fou, and is much declined from its former populous and magnificent state.

Marco was the first European who heard of the islands of Japan, the chief of which he describes in the following terms : " Zipangu is an island in the eastern ocean, situated about 1500 miles from the main land, or coast of Manji. It is pretty large ; the inhabit-

ants have fair complexions, are well made, and civilized in their manners. Their religion is idolatry. They are independent of every foreign power, and governed by their own kings. They have gold in the greatest abundance, their mines of it being inexhaustible; but as the exportation of it is forbidden, few merchants visit the country. To this circumstance we must ascribe the extraordinary richness of the sovereign's palace, which, according to what we are told by those who have seen it, has its entire roof covered with a plating of gold, in the same manner as we cover churches and other buildings with lead. The ceilings of the halls are of the same precious metal: many of the apartments have small tables of gold, and the windows have golden ornaments. So vast, indeed, are the riches of the palace, that it is impossible to convey an idea of them. — So famous was the wealth of this island, that the great khan Kublai was fired with the ambition of annexing it to his dominions. He fitted out a numerous fleet, and a powerful army, which invaded the island; but, in consequence of a jealousy existing between the two commanders of the expedition, they were unable to gain possession of any city or fortified place except one, which was carried by assault, the garrison having refused to surrender. These men were all put to death. Some time after, a violent storm blew from the north, and the Tartar ships were driven foul of each other. They were obliged to reembark their troops and put to sea; but the gale increased, and many of the ships foundered. Thirty thousand men saved themselves on floating pieces of the wrecks, and reached an island about four miles

from the coast of Zipangu: the other ships returned home.

"The Tartars on the island expected nothing but captivity or death, as the island afforded them no means of subsistence. When the gale had subsided, the people from Zipangu came over with a large force to attack them. When they landed, they marched in search of the Tartars in a straggling, disorderly manner. The Tartars took advantage of this, and, being concealed from view by high lands, they made a circuit, got in the rear of their enemies, took possession of their fleet, and pushed off for the main island. Keeping the colors of Zipangu flying at the masts, they entered the port of the chief city unsuspected, and found most of the inhabitants were absent except the women. When the sovereign of Zipangu heard of what had happened, he was deeply mortified, and ordered the city to be closely blockaded. This was done so effectually that, for six months, not a man went in or out of the city, and the Tartars, despairing of relief, surrendered, on condition of their lives being spared. This took place in the year 1284." — Such is Marco's account of Japan.

After a residence of seventeen years in China, our adventurers still felt their original attachment to their native land, and a desire to revisit it, notwithstanding the advantages of their situation. They moreover considered the great age and precarious life of their protector, and were aware that, after his death, the obstacles in the way of their return might be insurmountable. Kublai Khan, however, was unwilling to part with them, and their request drew from him some expressions of reproach.

If they wished for wealth, he informed them he was ready to gratify them to the utmost extent of their wishes, but he could not grant their petition for leave of departure. They now abandoned all hopes of ever seeing their home again; but from this state of impatience and disappointment, they were relieved in a manner wholly unexpected.

Shortly afterwards there chanced to arrive at the court of Kublai an embassy from a Mogul Tartar prince, then reigning in Persia, who had recently lost his wife. She, being a princess of the imperial stock, had entreated him, on her death-bed, that he would not disgrace her memory by forming an alliance with any inferior house. Accordingly, he sent this embassy to his sovereign and the head of his family, to solicit a wife of the imperial lineage. Kublai granted this request, and selected one of his own granddaughters, of the age of seventeen. The ambassadors, being satisfied with her beauty and accomplishments, set out with her on their journey to Persia; but after several months' travelling, found such obstacles in their way, on account of the disturbed state of the country through which their route lay, that they were obliged to return to the Chinese capital.

While they were in this embarrassed situation, Marco Polo, who had been on a voyage to some of the islands in the Indian seas, came into port, and laid before the emperor the observations which he had made respecting the safety of the navigation in those quarters. The ambassadors, hearing of this, and desirous to avail themselves of any feasible method of returning to Persia, sought an interview with the Venetians. They found that they all had a common interest, each party

being equally anxious to get away. The Persians, therefore, urgently represented to Kublai the necessity of taking advantage of this opportunity to return by sea; and although that monarch did not relish the proposal, as it would deprive him of the Venetians, he was compelled to give his consent. Preparations were made on a grand scale for this important expedition. Fourteen ships, each with four masts, some of them with crews of two hundred and fifty men, were equipped, and provisioned for two years. When the time for their departure was at hand, the monarch addressed the Polo family in terms of kind regard, and required from them a promise that, after paying a visit to their own country, they would return to his service. He, at the same time, gave them authority to act as his ambassadors to the principal courts of Europe, furnished them with the passports necessary for their protection and accommodation in the countries acknowledging his sovereignty, and made them presents of many valuable jewels.

Thus honorably dismissed, they set sail, with the Persian noblemen, the young queen, and a magnificent train of attendants, from the port of Amoy, in 1291. Coasting along the shores of Cochin China, they came in sight of the island of Java, though it appears they did not touch there. At the island of Bintan, near the Straits of Malacca, they acquired some knowledge of the kingdom of the Malays, at the extremity of the peninsula. They next put into several ports on the north-eastern coast of Sumatra, which island is very particularly described in Marco's travels. From his description we extract the following: —

"It should be known that what is reported respect-

ing the mummies of pygmies brought from India, is only an idle tale ; these pretended human dwarfs being manufactured in this island in the following manner : The country produces a large species of monkey, having a countenance resembling that of a man. The Sumatrans catch them, shave off their hair, dry and preserve their bodies with camphor and other drugs, and prepare them otherwise so as to give them the appearance of little men. They then pack them in wooden boxes, and sell them to traders, by whom they are vended for pygmies in all parts of the world. But there are no such things as pygmies either in India or any where else. It is all monkey-trade."

The monsoon being unfavorable, they were detained in one of the ports of this island five months, and on this occasion we have an indirect proof of the influence which Marco's superior talents gave him among those to whom the conduct of the expedition was intrusted. He established himself on shore with a body of two thousand men, and constructed a fortification to secure them from the treachery or hostilities of the savage inhabitants, whom, at the same time, he so far conciliated as to insure from them regular supplies of provisions. Of the eight kingdoms into which the island was divided, he visited six. From this port they sailed into the Bay of Bengal, touched at the Andaman and Nicobar islands, arrived at Ceylon, and continued their voyage along the western coast of Hindostan. The pearl fishery attracted the particular notice of the travellers ; and in Marco's description of the kingdom of Murphili, a circumstance is related which will remind the reader of one of the adventures of Sindbad the Sailor.

"Diamonds are found in the mountains of this kingdom. In the rainy season, the water rushes down in violent torrents among the rocks and caverns; and when they have subsided, the people go to search for diamonds in the beds of the torrents, where they find many. In summer, when the heat is excessive, and there is no rain, they ascend the mountains with great fatigue, and encountering much danger from the snakes with which they are infested. Near the summits, it is said that there are deep valleys full of caverns, and surrounded by precipices, where diamonds abound. Many eagles and white storks, attracted by the snakes, on which they prey, make their nests in these inaccessible spots. The diamond-hunters take their stand near the mouths of these rocky gulfs, and throw down into them pieces of flesh, which are snatched up by the eagles and storks, and carried off to the tops of the rocks. The men immediately climb up, scare the birds away, and find diamonds sticking to the pieces of meat."

Marco has been greatly ridiculed for relating this wonderful story, not so much on account of its improbability, as from the suspicion that he copied it from the Arabian Nights, merely to embellish his narrative. That collection of tales, however, was hardly compiled in Marco's time, and there is no doubt the story was current in India, and other parts of the eastern world. It may be found in the writings of Epiphanius, a Christian father of the fourth century. Our traveller relates it as a hearsay, but does not vouch for its truth. — Besides the countries which he visited, he also gives descriptions of unexplored regions, on the

authority of persons with whom he conversed, and who showed him maps of those parts. The Arabian Nights may be again recognized in the following hearsay story of the wonders of the island of Madagascar: —

"The people of this island report that, at a certain season of the year, an extraordinary kind of bird called a *rukh*, arrives there from the south. In form it is said to resemble the eagle, but it is incomparably beyond it in size, being so large and strong that it is able to seize an elephant in its talons and lift it into the air, from whence the bird drops it that it may be killed in the fall. Persons who have seen this bird assert that, when the wings are spread, they measure sixteen paces from tip to tip; and that the feathers are eight paces long, and thick in proportion. The great khan, having heard this extraordinary relation, sent messengers to the island, on the pretext of demanding the release of one of his servants who had been detained there, but in reality to explore the country, and ascertain the truth of the wonderful things told of it. When they returned to China, they brought with them, as I have heard, a feather of the *rukh*, positively affirmed to have measured ninety spans, and to have been two palms in circumference at the quill-end."

The existence of this enormous bird was universally credited in the East, and may have had more foundation in fact than seems apparent at first sight. That races of animals, of a prodigious size, formerly inhabited the earth, but are now wholly extinct, is a truth of which the discoveries in geology are every day affording overwhelming proofs. Tracks of a bird's feet have been found on the banks of the Connecticut,

fifteen inches in length. Two or three centuries ago, a bird of a strange form, called the *dodo*, existed in the Isle of France, but is not now to be found in any part of the world. The rukh of Marco Polo and the Arabian Nights might have had a real existence, making proper allowances for poetical exaggeration.*

* This interesting point of natural history will receive further illustration in the account of some discoveries recently made in New Zealand. In a letter from the Rev. Wm. Williams, dated at Poverty Bay, in that country, May 17, 1842, and addressed to Dr. Buckland, he makes the following statement: — "It is about three years ago, in paying a visit to this coast, south of the East Cape, that the natives told me of some extraordinary monster which they said was in existence in an inaccessible cavern on the side of a hill, near the River Wairoa; and they showed me, at the same time, some fragments of bone, taken out of the beds of rivers, which they said belonged to the creature, to which they gave the name of *moa*. When I came to reside in this neighborhood, I heard the same story a little enlarged, for it was said that this creature was still existing at the said hill, of which the name is *Wakapunake*, and that it is guarded by a reptile of the lizard species, but I could not learn that any of the present generation had seen it. I still considered the whole as an idle fable, but offered a large reward to any who would catch me either the bird or its protector. At length, a bone was brought from the river running at the foot of the hill, of large size, but the extremities were so much worn away, that I could not determine any thing as to its proper relationship. About two months ago, a single bone, of smaller size, was brought from a fresh-water stream in this bay, for which I gave a good payment, and this induced the natives to go in large numbers to turn up the mud at the banks and in the bed of the same river, and soon a large number of bones were brought, of various dimensions. On a comparison with the bones of a fowl, I immediately perceived that they belonged to a bird of gigantic size. The greatest height of the bird was probably not less than fourteen or sixteen feet. This

Marco also describes the giraffe, an animal whose existence was doubted in Europe till Vaillant killed one at the Cape of Good Hope, and carried the skin to Paris.

At Ormuz, in the Persian Gulf, the voyage appears to have ended, after a navigation of a year and a half Six hundred of the crews, including two of the Persian

bird was in existence here at no very distant time, for the bones are found in the beds of the present streams, and do not appear to have been brought into their present situation by the action of any violent rush of waters. Within the last few days, I have obtained a piece of information worthy of notice. Happening to speak to an American about these bones, he told me that the bird *is still in existence* in the neighborhood of Cloudy Bay, in Cook's Straits. He said that the natives there had mentioned to an Englishman belonging to a whaling party, that there was a bird, of extraordinary size, to be seen only at night on the side of a hill near the place, and that he, with a native and a second Englishman, went to the spot; that, after waiting some time, they saw the creature at some little distance, which they describe as being about fourteen or sixteen feet high. One of the men proposed to go nearer and shoot, but his companion was so exceedingly terrified, or perhaps both of them, that they were satisfied with looking at him; when, in a little time, he took the alarm, and strode off up the sides of the mountain. This incident might not have been worth mentioning, had it not been for the extraordinary agreement in point of the size of the bird. Here are the bones, which will satisfy you that such a bird *has been* in existence, and there is said to be the *living bird*, the supposed size of which, given by an independent witness, precisely agrees."

The above-mentioned bones have been sent to England, where they have excited the astonishment of scientific men. Professor Owen declares that it is not saying too much to characterize the great bird of New Zealand as one of the most remarkable additions to zoology which the present century has produced.

noblemen, had died during this time. Kublai Khan died in 1294, and the fleet probably never returned to China.

The princess and her train, accompanied by the Venetians, continued their route by land, but received intelligence that the king, for whose consort the princess was intended, had died some time previous; that the country was then governed by a regent or protector, who was supposed to be aiming at the crown, and that Ghazan, the son of the late king, was encamped with a large army on the north-eastern frontier, waiting, as it appeared, for a favorable opportunity of asserting his right to the throne. To this prince they delivered their royal charge, and the Venetians then repaired to the court of the regent, where they reposed from the fatigues of their travels for nine months. Resuming their journey, they proceeded to Trebizond, on the Euxine Sea, at which port they embarked, touched at Constantinople and Negropont, and, in the year 1295, arrived at their native city of Venice in the full possession of their health and riches.

They were received, by their countrymen and kindred, like Ulysses on his return to Ithaca. Their nearest relations did not know them, especially as rumors of their death had been current, and confidently believed. By the length of time they had been absent, the labors and fatigues of their long journey, and the anxieties which they had suffered, their appearance was quite changed, and they seemed to have acquired something of the Tartar characteristics, both in countenance and speech; when they attempted to converse in Italian, they could not avoid mixing it up with

foreign idioms and barbarous words. Possession had been taken of their house by some of their kindred, and they found it difficult to expel the occupants, who would not willingly believe that persons of so uncouth an appearance could be those members of the Polo family who had for so many years been numbered with the dead. In order, therefore, to render themselves generally known to their connections, and at the same time to impress the whole city with an adequate idea of their importance, they devised the following expedient: —

A magnificent entertainment was prepared, to which their numerous relatives were invited. When the hour for assembling at table was come, the three travellers issued from an inner apartment, clothed in long robes of crimson satin, reaching to the floor, such as were commonly worn upon occasions of ceremony in those days. After the guests had taken their places, they stripped themselves of these rich vestments and divided them among the company. They next put on robes of crimson damask, and, after the first course at dinner, divided these in like manner, replacing the damask dress with crimson velvet, which, at the close of the feast, were disposed of in the same way. The hosts then appeared in plain suits, like those of the rest of the company. All were astonished at what they saw, and wondered what was to follow. When the cloth was removed, Marco Polo rose from table, went into an adjoining room, and presently returned with the three coarse, threadbare garments, in which they had first made their appearance at the house. With the assistance of knives, they proceeded to rip the seams.

and strip off the linings and patches with which these rags were doubled, and by this operation brought to view a large quantity of the most costly gems, as rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, diamonds, and emeralds, which had been sewed into them with so much art, that no thieves or robbers ever would have suspected them of containing such treasures. All the wealth which the great khan had bestowed upon them had been converted into precious stones, just before their departure, for facility of conveyance. The display of riches so incalculable in amount, which lay exposed on the table before them, caused such astonishment in the spectators, that for some time they remained struck dumb, and, upon recovering from their surprise, acknowledged they had sufficient proof that the strangers were, in truth, the honorable and valiant gentlemen of the house of Polo.

Their fame spread throughout the city, and their house was thronged with visitors eager to listen to the recital of their adventures, and partake of their liberality. Marco was the chief narrator; and his description of the enormous wealth and population of the Chinese empire—facts now well averred, but then considered utterly incredible — acquired him the name of *Messer Marco Millioni*, by which he is actually designated in the records of the republic; although one writer affirms that this name arose from the enormous wealth of the Polo family. Their house is known at the present day as the "Corte del Millioni."

Marco's adventures were not yet ended. The Venetians were at war with the Genoese; and, a few months after his return to Venice, Marco, as an ex-

perienced seaman, was appointed to the command of a galley in the fleet of Andrea Dandolo. A Genoese fleet, under Zampa Doria, appeared in the Adriatic, and a battle took place, in which the Venetians were defeated with great loss. Marco's galley being in the van of the Venetians, and not properly supported by the others, was captured, and Marco suffered an imprisonment of four years at Genoa. Here, as at Venice, his personal qualities and surprising history becoming known, he was visited by all the principal inhabitants, who did every thing in their power to soften the rigor of his captivity. His rare adventures were the subject of general curiosity; and it is remarkable that, but for the misfortune of this captivity, the world would probably have been deprived of any written account of his travels. The frequent necessity which he was under of repeating the same story, soon became intolerably irksome to him, and he was compelled, fortunately for the promotion of geographical science, to which this gave the first impulse, to follow the advice of those who recommended his committing it to writing. With this view, he procured from Venice the original notes which he had made in the course of his travels, and, with the assistance of these documents, the narrative was composed in his prison, by a Genoese gentleman, who was in the habit of passing many hours with him daily. It is seldom that so much valuable knowledge has been neglected by the possessor and secured to the world by the exertions of others. Marco returned to Venice at the end of four years, and spent, it is supposed, the remainder of his life in that city. He lived to about the age of seventy, though

the precise date of his death is unknown. His Travels constitute a work of great research and high interest. Though eagerly read for the marvels which it contained, it was for a long time considered as a tissue of fabrications ; but more accurate investigations have demonstrated the veracity of the author in relating what came under his personal observation.

ADVENTURES OF MENDEZ PINTO.

This adventurous traveller is hardly known to the English reader except with the most discreditable associations. The proverbial expression of the English dramatist — "Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude" — has stamped his character, with us, as an impudent divulger of what Swift calls "the thing which is not." The unfortunate Pinto has come down to us, through the long vista of three hundred years, with a label round his neck as the "Prince of Liars," fastened there, apparently forever, by the hand of the great Cervantes, — himself not only prince, but emperor, of the realm of fiction, no portion or fragment of which he chose to part with for the embellishment of a work professing to be true. This condemnation savors full as much of the prejudice entertained by the Spanish against the Portuguese author, as of the lover of truth against the lying legendary. With regard to many circumstances, posterity, though late, will do that justice to the reputation of Pinto which was denied by his own times. In his book he tells us of "beautiful gardens, in which the moon sheds such a kindly influence, that the roses bloom every month instead of every summer!" This marvel was scouted at as an improbable fiction in his

time; yet, we see these monthly roses the common ornament of our northern gardens. He describes "a wonderful *beast* with two legs, and in some respects resembling a bird," which late discoveries have identified as the cassowary. His account of the pagoda of Trinkamalar, before whose chariot-wheels so many wretches sacrifice themselves, was thought utterly incredible in his day, but it is so far from being strange to us, that, unhappily, the horrors of Juggernaut are as well verified as those of the Spanish Inquisition.

Fernam Mendez Pinto was a native of Portugal. He begins his history by lamenting the malice of fortune, and declaring that the history of his travels and his sorrows is all that he has to leave to his children. He informs us that, in the space of twenty-one years, he was thirteen times a captive, and seventeen times sold as a slave; he speaks of his parents as poor people, and says that he was too much indulged by his mother, whom he left, at the age of eleven or twelve years, to enter the service of a lady. By the advice of his uncle, he left Portugal, in 1537, in a ship commanded by Don Pedro de Silva, son of Vasco de Gama, for the East Indies. They touched at various places, encountered a variety of accidents, and arrived at Mocha, where they met with some bad offices from the commander of a vessel, a renegade Christian, who, having married a Mahometan wife, had abjured his religion. "The captains were much amazed at this instance of religious declension, and attempted gently to persuade the renegade to return to the true faith; but the caitiff answered, with a churlish obstinacy, that nothing should compel him to do so. By such speeches

the captains, perceiving that there was no hope of reclaiming him from his error, seized him, bound him hand and foot, and, tying a great stone round his neck, caused him to be thrown into the sea — thus sending him to share the torments of Mahomet, and to be his companion in the other world as he had been his confidant in this." The infidel being executed in this manner, they took out the people from his ship, and then sank it, with all the goods that were in it. This barbarous act was but an exhibition of the spirit of the times in the sixteenth century.

Some time after this, the adventurers were captured in the Red Sea by three Turkish vessels, taken to land, and thrust into a dungeon, where all their food consisted of a few peas soaked in water. Under their sufferings many of them died; but, after a while, Pinto and nine others were drawn out to be sold as slaves. The former was purchased by a Greek renegade, who, for three whole months, tortured him incessantly, and then sold him to a Jew, lest he should die upon his hands. His pitiable condition wrought upon the charitable feelings of the inhabitants of the place: he was ransomed by contribution, and sent to Goa, where he entered the service of the king of Portugal. We cannot pause to detail his adventures in Sumatra and the neighboring islands. He appears to have had good reason for terming fortune his bitter enemy; for no sooner had he obtained a few ducats, from the bounty of a chief or the capture of some prize, than the pirates or the Turks contrived to get them away — or the waves, equally merciless, swallowed them up. Pinto was, however, a true sailor, ever ready to begin

a new voyage, and willing, as he says, "to get a better coat than that on his back," by any adventures in the service of any master.

The greatest trouble of his troubled life now approached. On a voyage to China, he was shipwrecked in the Gulf of Nankin. Out of twenty-five Portuguese, only fourteen were saved. Pinto says, "This miserable disaster happened on a Monday, in 1542, the 5th of August, for which the Lord be praised everlastingly." Cast, in this manner, upon the shores of a country ever inhospitable to strangers, and, doubtless, at that time, hostile to all Christian visitors, without food or clothing, and expecting to be devoured by the tigers, their situation was indeed deplorable. Their numbers were soon reduced by the loss of four, who were drowned in crossing a river, as they were attempting to make their way northward, where they hoped to reach the city of Nankin. On every day's history of this disastrous period, the luckless narrator dwells with that minute remembrance which cold and hunger, stripes and nakedness, had indelibly imprinted on his memory.

According to his account, there were in China, at that time, in most of the towns, "houses of the poor," where relief might be obtained for three days, but no longer, except by the sick. At one of these the sufferers were kindly assisted, and even forwarded to another; but, when compelled to leave this, and thrown on the mercy of the less civilized inhabitants, their miseries were augmented. In one village, they were pitilessly flogged, and driven forth without food; in the next, their wounds were dressed, food and clothing were given to them, and their way was pointed out.

But on the very same night, when they were discovered in a wood, where they had taken shelter, they were denounced as thieves, dragged to a loathsome prison, and cruelly whipped; here they suffered for twenty-six days, with fetters on their hands and feet, and heavy iron collars on their necks. From this place they were sent to Nankin, to be tried for their lives.

On the road, they were again imprisoned for forty-two days, and treated with so much cruelty that three of them died, and the wonder, indeed, is, that any one survived. At one place, after another severe flogging, they were all thrust naked into large cisterns, and for two days and nights they stood thus plunged up to the waist in water abounding with horse-leeches. After all these hardships, on their arrival at Nankin, they were sentenced to be publicly whipped, and have their thumbs cut off: the former part of the sentence was carried into effect with such severity that another of them died. It appears, however, that the court which condemned them was subject to a revision of its judgment, and, at the instance of a certain fraternity, resembling the Order of Mercy in Catholic countries, they obtained relief; the magistrates, who had overstepped their authority, were called to account, and reproved for their conduct; and the shipwrecked wanderers, after their recovery, were furnished with a long letter reversing the sentence, which is thus dated: "Written in the chamber of the zeal of God's honor, on the ninth day of the seventh moon, and the twenty-third year of the reign of the Lion, crowned in the throne of the world."

Pinto, recovered in some measure from his wounds, begins to look about him in the great city of Nankin,

but declares that he will never relate one half of the riches and grandeur which he there beheld. "The Chinese assured us," says he, "that the city contains 800,000 hearths; 80,000 mandarins' houses; 62 great market-places; 130 butchers' shambles, each containing 80 shops; 8000 streets, of which 600 of the handsomest are adorned with balustrades of copper. There are 2300 pagodas, exceedingly rich and sumptuous, with very high steeples, in which were such enormously huge bells that it was terrifying to hear them rung." The ceremonies of religion frequently gave much offence to the Catholic traveller; yet he greatly praises the government, the wisdom, and even the piety of the Chinese, observing that "those gentiles take abundant pains to damn their souls by their devotion to vain idols — much more than we do, by true worship, to save ours."

The Tartars having invaded China about this time, the Portuguese, whose hatred of the Chinese was inextinguishable, took an opportunity of joining their camp. The description of their introduction to the Tartar king, and the magnificence of his court, is given at great length by Pinto. There never was another gazer at sights who could describe a procession, the reception of an ambassador, or any of the gaudy and dazzling pageantries of an Eastern court, with the skill of this traveller. Every mottoed lantern, silken banner, and gilded device, is registered by him with the most circumstantial minuteness; and the regular succession of aged nobles, fair damsels, armed warriors, beautiful boys, bearers of censers and of standards, strewers of flowers, beaters of cymbals, &c., in all their varieties

of crimson, scarlet, green, and yellow, with golden coronets, braided tresses, and flowery wreaths, are arranged in their places with the utmost precision.

The Portuguese were conducted through many files of visitors, and extensive quadrangles, to a large space, where they saw four rows of brazen statues, representing wild men, with gilded crowns and clubs; these gigantic idols were twenty-six spans high, and six broad in the shoulders; their countenances were deformed and hideous, and their hair was curled like that of negroes. They saw also a plantation of orange-trees, surrounded with a fence of flowers unknown in Europe, in which was a tent perched upon twelve balusters of camphor-wood, wreathed about with silver, in the fashion of knotted card-work. In the tent was a low throne, garnished with branch-work of fine gold, and over it was a cloth of state, set thick with silver stars, the sun, and moon, and clouds — some white, and others like those before rain, — all so enamelled that nothing could surpass them for beauty. On the throne was a great statue of silver, and around it were thirty-four idols upon their knees.

The Tartar king sat upon his throne under a rich cloth of state, and had about him twelve young boys kneeling, and with golden sceptres on their shoulders. Close behind him stood a young lady of rare beauty, sumptuously attired, fanning the monarch. He was about forty years of age, of full height, somewhat lean, and of a good countenance; his eyes had the Chinese look, and his regard was serene and majestic. His dress was violet-color, and in fashion like a Turkish robe, embroidered with pearl; on his feet were green

sandals, wrought all over with gold and pearls: on his head he wore a cap of violet satin, with a rich band of diamonds and rubies. The king asked the Portuguese many questions, and was astonished at the new facts in geography implied in their accounts of the country from which they came, and its distance from China.

Pinto and his companions experienced much generosity from this monarch, although his war with the Chinese did not result successfully to his arms. On their departure from the country, their misfortunes were renewed. They fell in with a Chinese pirate, and were plundered of their property. On touching at the Loo Choo islands, they were apprehended as spies, and sentenced to be put to death by being quartered. From this horrible fate they were rescued by a Portuguese woman who was married to a native. She interested a number of ladies in their behalf, who petitioned the queen-mother with such success, that the Portuguese were not only spared, but sent honorably out of the country laden with presents from charitable people. In Japan, Malaya, Pegu, and various other countries, innumerable adventures awaited them, but we are compelled to pass them over. We will give one story, related by Pinto, which is characteristic of the state of society in the East.

A Portuguese, named Diego Suarez, resided a long time at Pegu, where he acquired such importance that he was made a governor, and went by the title of the "king's brother." There was a rich Peguan, named Mangabosa, whose daughter was about to be married to a nobleman by whom she was ardently beloved. On the morning of the day fixed for the nuptials, Suarez hap-

pened to pass the house of Mangabosa, and, observing the magnificent preparations made for the wedding, inquired the cause. The father, considering himself as honored by such a notice, sent for his daughter and her bridemaids ; and when she made her appearance at the door, he ordered her to draw from her finger a valuable ring, and present it to the governor, as he sat on his elephant. Struck with her extraordinary beauty, that officer seized her by the hand, and, drawing her forcibly towards him, exclaimed, "God forbid that so fair a maid should fall into any hands but mine." The old man, overcome with terror and apprehension for his daughter, fell on his knees and besought the ravisher's mercy, but was answered only by an order for his death. The bridegroom and his relatives arriving opportunely at that moment, the old man was rescued and carried into the house. A bloody contest then took place between them and the attendants of the governor; the lover, his father, and seven of his kinsmen, were slain, and the distracted bride was carried off by Suarez to his palace, where, in a fit of despair, she put an end to her life by strangling herself with her girdle.

The grief of her aged father knew no bounds nor abatement. For the space of four years he never crossed his threshold without being clothed in a tattered mat, and begging alms of his own slaves, an Eastern method of displaying the intensity of sorrow. On the death of the king, by whom the ravisher had been protected, Mangabosa rushed out of his house, and, seizing in his arms an idol sacred to the afflicted, he stood on the steps of the temple, and harangued the people upon his wrongs and sufferings. The populace, inspired by pity and generous indignation, rushed to

the palace of the new king, and demanded justice. The monarch, willing to conciliate them at his accession to the throne, ordered his guard to seize the governor and deliver him into the hands of the people. He was arrested in the street, and dragged to the stairs of the market-place, where he prayed fervently, as a Christian, to Heaven; but the injured father, still holding his idol, called out for vengeance; and, the people pushing him down the stairs, he fell into the hands of the infuriated mob, who tore him in pieces: extending their vengeance even to his officers and slaves, these were made to suffer for the crimes of their master; while the king seized on the immense wealth which, for fourteen years, he had been accumulating in that country.

Pinto, after a series of adventures, extending through twenty-one years, reached his native land in safety, where he passed the remainder of his life in poverty and neglect, and composing the narrative of his travels, destined to excite the sneer of the wise, and the sport of the satirist. That his stories are true, in all their particulars, we are far from believing; travellers will sometimes tell travellers' tales; but he is by no means the impostor which he was once deemed. He doubtless embellishes his narrative at times; and as it was probably composed from memory, he must have fallen into many unintentional errors. But he never misleads his readers, except to contribute to their amusement, in presenting to their eyes splendid pageants, magnificent processions, and brilliant spectacles; or to excite their commiseration by such repeated sorrows and hardships, such flagellations and imprisonments, as are calculated to create the wonder of those who are quietly seated

at their firesides. With respect to any regular description of places, such as their geographical situation, form of government, produce, trade, literature, or science, he neither troubles himself nor his reader about them ; but bears, throughout his narrative, the air of an illiterate stroller, who sought to get his bread and satisfy curiosity by wandering from country to country.

Pinto's accounts of the Eastern sovereigns whose courts he happened to visit, and in whose battles he was engaged, appear to us faithful in their general history, since they partake precisely of the characteristics of all despotic governments, and, in the most terrific pictures which they exhibit of ferocity and endurance, do not surpass the well-authenticated accounts of similar personages, performing on similar theatres, at the present day. He does not depict one tyrant so sanguinary as Djezzar, or Ali Pacha, nor one overthrow more complete than that of the latter. In his pages, as in those of other writers, from that period to the present, an Eastern sovereign ever appears in the light of a mighty volcano, from whose mouth destruction issues, with the force and rapidity of the burning lava.

A few melancholy reflections and bitter lamentations wind up the sad and eventful history of Mendez Pinto. He complains that the services which he has performed for the space of twenty-one years, in which he was sold sixteen times, were never recompensed ; but he offers a kind excuse for his sovereign's neglect, and acknowledges that it is right he should be thus humbled in order to purify him from his sins. His readers may perhaps agree in this, even while they are indebted to him for many graphic pictures of Asiatic manners and customs.

THE FORTUNES

OF

THE FAMILY OF AIAS.

Jehangire.

Chaja Aias, his beautiful daughter, and the fortunes of his whole family, are still remembered in the East. Their story is often related, as presenting an extraordinary instance of the strange vicissitudes of human life,

and the most unforeseen elevation from extreme poverty and obscurity to unbounded wealth and power.

Chaja Aias, a native of Western Tartary, left that country, about the end of the sixteenth century, to push his fortune in Hindostan. He was descended of an ancient and noble family, fallen into decay by various revolutions of fortune. He, however, had received a good education, which was all his parents could bestow. Falling in love with a young woman as poor as himself, he married her; but he found it difficult to provide for her the very necessaries of life. Reduced to the last extremity, he turned his thoughts upon India, the usual resource of the needy Tartars of the north. He left, without acquainting them with his purpose, the friends who either could not or would not assist him, and turned his face to a foreign country. His whole property consisted of a sorry horse, and a very small sum of money, which had proceeded from the sale of his other effects. Placing his wife upon the horse, he walked by her side. Their scanty pittance of money was soon expended; they had even subsisted for some days upon charity, when they arrived on the skirts of the Great Solitudes, which separate Tartary from the dominions of the family of Timour, in India. No house was there to cover them from the inclemency of the weather, no hand to relieve their wants. To return, was certain misery; to proceed, apparent destruction. They had fasted three days. In this distressed situation, the wife of Chaja Aias gave birth to a daughter. They remained for some hours, in the vain hope that travellers might pass that way, but they were disappointed. Human feet seldom tread these deserts; the

sun declined apace; they feared the approach of night; the place was the haunt of wild beasts, and, should they escape these, they must die of hunger. In this extremity, Aias, having placed his wife on the horse, found himself so much exhausted that he could scarcely move. To carry the child was impossible; the mother could not even maintain herself upon the horse. A long contest began between humanity and necessity; the latter prevailed, and they agreed to expose the child on the highway. The infant, covered with leaves, was placed under a tree, and the disconsolate parents proceeded in tears.

When they had gone about a mile from the place, and the eyes of the mother could no longer distinguish the solitary tree under which she had left her daughter, she gave way to grief, and, throwing herself on the ground, exclaimed, "My child! my child!" She endeavored to raise herself, but she had not sufficient strength. Her husband was pierced to the heart with anguish, and he promised to bring her the infant. He arrived at the place; but no sooner had his eyes rested upon the child, than he was struck aghast with horror. A huge serpent was coiled round it, and Aias believed he beheld him extending his fatal jaws to devour the infant. The father rushed forward; the serpent, alarmed at his vociferations, retired into the hollow of the tree. He took up his daughter, unhurt, and returned to the mother. He gave her into her arms; and, while he was informing her of the wonderful escape of the infant, some travellers appeared and relieved them. They proceeded onward in their company, and came to Lahore.

The emperor Akbar then kept his court at Lahore. Asiph Chan, one of the monarch's principal omrahs, attended the imperial presence. He was a distant relation of Aias, received him with attention and friendship, and made him his own secretary. Aias soon recommended himself to Asiph in that station, and, by some accident, his diligence and ability attracted the notice of the emperor, who promoted him to the command of a thousand horse. He became, in process of time, master of the household; and, his genius being still greater than even his good fortune, he was raised to the office of high treasurer of the empire. Thus he who had almost perished through mere want in the desert, became, in the space of a few years, the first subject in India.

The daughter who had been born in the desert received the name of *Mher-ul-Nissa*, or the "sun of women." She had some right to the appellation, for in beauty she excelled all the ladies of the East. She was educated with the utmost care; in music, dancing, poetry, and painting, she had no equal among her sex. Her disposition was volatile; her wit lively and satirical; her spirit lofty and uncontrolled.

Selim, the prince royal, paid a visit one day to her father. When the public entertainment was over, when all except the principal guests were withdrawn, and wine was brought on the table, the ladies, according to custom, were introduced in their veils. The ambition of Mher-ul-Nissa aspired to a conquest of the prince. She sang — he was in raptures: she danced — he could hardly be restrained in his place. Her stature, her shape, her gait, had raised his ideas of her beauty

to the highest pitch. When his eyes seemed to devour her, she, as by accident, dropped her veil, and shone upon him at once with all her charms. The confusion which she could well feign on the occasion, heightened the beauty of her face. Her timid eye fell, by stealth, upon the prince, and kindled his soul into love. He was silent for the remaining part of the evening; she endeavored to confirm, by her wit, the conquest which the charms of her person had made.

Selim, bewildered with his passion, knew not what course to pursue. Mher-ul-Nissa had been betrothed by her father to Shere Afkun, a Turkomanian nobleman of great renown. Selim applied to his father, Akbar, who sternly refused to commit a piece of injustice, though in favor of the heir of his throne. The prince retired abashed, and Mher-ul-Nissa became the wife of Shere Afkun. The latter, however, suffered, in his prospects in life, for not having made a voluntary resignation of the lady to the enamored prince. Though Selim durst make no open attack upon his fortunate rival during the life of Akbar, men in office worshipped the rising sun, and threw marked disgrace on Shere Afkun. He became disgusted, and left the court of Agra. He retired into the province of Bengal, and obtained from the suba of that country the superintendency of the district of Burdwan.

The passion for Mher-ul-Nissa, which Selim had repressed from a respect and fear of his father, returned with redoubled violence when he himself mounted the throne of India, with the name of Jehangire. He was now absolute. No subject could thwart his will. He recalled Shere Afkun from his retreat; but, unwilling

so grossly to shock public opinion as to deprive him of his life, he sought to obtain his object by negotiation. But Shere was inflexible; for no man of honor in India can part with his spouse, and retain his life. He was, moreover, high-spirited, and it was not to be expected that he would yield to indignity and public shame. His family and reputation were high. Born of noble parents in Turkomania, he had spent his youth in Persia, and had served with uncommon renown. His original name was Asta Jillo; but, having killed a lion, he was dignified with the title of Shere Afkun, or the "Overthrower of the Lion." Under the latter name he became famous in India, and distinguished himself by prodigies of strength and valor.

Jehangire kept his court at Delhi, one of the most splendid cities of the East, where he called Shere Afkun to his presence. He received him graciously, and conferred new honors upon him. Shere, naturally frank and generous, suspected not the emperor's intentions. Time, he thought, had erased the memory of Mher-ul-Nissa from the monarch's mind: He was deceived; the king was resolved to remove his rival, but the means which he adopted were at once foolish and disgraceful. He appointed a day for hunting, and ordered the haunt of an enormous tiger to be explored. News soon came that a tiger of extraordinary size was discovered in the forest of Nidarbari. This monster, it was said, had carried off many of the largest oxen from the neighboring villages. The emperor directed thither his march, attended by Shere Afkun and several thousands of his principal officers, with all their trains. Having, according to the custom of the Mogul Tartars,

surrounded the place for many miles, they began to move toward the centre on all sides. The tiger was roused; his roaring was heard, and the emperor hastened to the scene of action.

The nobles being assembled, Jehangire called aloud, "Who among you will advance singly and attack this tiger?" They looked on one another in silence; then all turned their eyes on Shere Afkun. He seemed not to understand their meaning. At length, three omrahs started forth from the circle, and, sacrificing fear to shame, fell at the emperor's feet, and begged permission to try, singly, their strength against the formidable animal. The pride of Shere Afkun arose. He had imagined that none durst attempt a deed so dangerous. He hoped that, after the refusal of the nobles, the honor of the enterprise would devolve on him. Afraid of losing his former renown, Shere Afkun began thus in the presence: "To attack an animal with weapons is both unmanly and unfair. God has given to man limbs and sinews as well as to tigers: he has added reason to the former, to conduct his strength." The other omrahs objected in vain that the tiger could be overcome only with steel. "I will convince you of your mistake," Shere Afkun replied; and, throwing down his sword and shield, prepared to advance unarmed.

Though the emperor was in secret pleased with a proposal coinciding with his views, he made a show of dissuading him from the enterprise; but Shere was determined. The monarch, with feigned reluctance, yielded. Astonishment was painted in every face; every tongue was silent. The Eastern writers give a particular, but incredible, detail of the battle that ensued

between Shere and the tiger; this much is certain, that, after a long and obstinate struggle, the intrepid warrior prevailed, and, though mangled with wounds himself, the monster was at last laid dead at his feet. The fame of Shere was increased, and the designs of the emperor foiled; but the determined despot paused not here.

The hero had scarcely recovered from his wounds, when he came to pay his respects at court. He was caressed by the emperor, and suspected no guile; a snare, however, was prepared for him. Jehangire had meanly condescended to give private orders to the rider of one of his largest elephants to waylay his rival in one of the narrow streets, and tread him to death. Shere was going abroad in his palanquin. He saw the elephant in his way, and ordered the bearers to turn back. The elephant came forward; they threw the palanquin with their master in the street, and fled to save their lives. Shere had just time to rise; he drew his sword, and struck the elephant across the root of the trunk, which was severed at a blow. The animal roared, turned from him, fell down, and expired. The emperor was looking out at a window, and witnessed the event: he retired with amazement and shame. Shere continued his way to the palace. Without any suspicion of treachery, he related the particulars to Jehangire, who disguised his sentiments, but relinquished not his designs.

For the space of six months, no further attempts were made against the life of Shere, who now retired to the capital of Bengal. The designs of Jehangire were no secret; they were the subject of common conversation, little to the advantage of the character

of a great prince. Monarchs, however, are never without attendants and parasites, who flatter their worst passions. Kuttub, the suba of Bengal, was one of these convenient sycophants. To ingratiate himself with the emperor, — though perhaps not by his express commands, — he hired forty ruffians to attack and murder Shere. He was apprized of this, and continued within his own doors; but such was his confidence in his own strength and valor, that at night he would not permit his servants to remain in his house. An old porter only, of the men-servants, continued with him.

The assassins made their observations on the house, and found that there was a room within the principal door which Shere used as a writing-chamber; this communicated, by a narrow passage, with the sleeping apartments. When it was dark, they took advantage of the old porter's absence, and conveyed themselves, without discovery, into the house. The principal door being bolted at the usual hour, Shere and his family went to bed. Some of the assassins, when they thought he was fallen asleep, stole silently into his apartment. They prepared to plunge their daggers into his body, when one of them, who was an old man, being touched with remorse, cried with a loud voice, "Hold! have we not the emperor's orders? Let us behave like men. Shall forty fall upon one, and that one asleep?" "Boldly spoken!" said Shere, starting that instant from his bed. Seizing his sword, he placed himself in a corner of the room. There he was attacked by the assassins; in a few minutes, many of them lay, weltering in their blood, at his feet; scarce one half escaped without wounds. The old man who had given

him warning did not attempt to fly. Shere took him by the hand, praised and thanked him for his behavior, and, having learned of him who had hired the assassins, dismissed him with handsome presents.

The fame of this gallant exploit resounded through the whole empire. Shere could not stir abroad for the multitude that pressed around him. He, however, thought proper to retire from the capital of Bengal to his old residence at Burdwan. He hoped to live there in obscurity and safety; but he was deceived. The suba of Bengal had received his government for the purpose of removing the unfortunate Shere, and he was not unmindful of it. He adopted, at last, the following expedient: He set out on a tour through the dependent provinces, and in his route he came to Burdwan. He made no secret to his principal officers that he had the emperor's orders for despatching Shere. That devoted hero, hearing that the suba was entering the town, mounted his horse, and went, with two servants only, to pay his respects to the governor. The suba received him with affected politeness; they rode for some time side by side, and their conversation turned upon indifferent affairs. The suba suddenly stopped, and ordered his elephant of state to be brought, which he mounted under a pretence of appearing with becoming pomp in the city of Burdwan. Shere stood still while the suba was ascending; and one of the pikemen, pretending that Shere was in the way, struck his horse, and began to drive him before him. Shere was enraged at the affront: he knew that the pikeman durst not have used that freedom without his master's orders. He saw plainly a design against his life; he

turned round upon the pikeman, and threatened him with instant death. He fell on the ground and begged for mercy. Swords were drawn: Shere had no time to lose: he spurred his horse up to the elephant on which the suba was mounted, and, having broken down the *amari* or castle, severed him in twain, and thus the wretched Kuttub became the victim of his own treachery. Shere did not rest here; he turned his sword on the other officers. The first that fell by his hand was Aba Chan, a native of Cashmere, who was an omrah of five thousand horse. Four other nobles shared the same fate. Death attended every blow: the remaining chiefs, in astonishment and terror, fled to a distance, and formed a circle around the hero. Some began to gall him with their arrows, others fired their muskets. His horse, at length, being shot with a ball in the forehead, fell under him. The unfortunate Shere, reduced to the last extremity, upbraided them for their cowardice, and invited them to single combat; but he begged in vain. He had already received several wounds, and plainly saw his approaching fate. Turning his face toward Mecca, he took up some dust with his hand, and, for want of water, threw it, by way of ablution, upon his head. He then stood up, and six balls entered his body in different places before he fell. His enemies had scarce the courage to come near till they saw him in the agonies of death.

Whether Jehangire felt remorse at the death of his victim, or only wished to allow some time to pass away before he took possession of his blood-bought prize, in order to induce people to suppose he had no hand in the murder of her husband, or whether his

passion had subsided, we have no means of ascertaining. It appears, however, that for four years the matchless beauty remained shut up in the worst apartment that his harem afforded, without once seeing the emperor. She endured her fate not only with resignation, but with cheerfulness, still sustained by the hope that accident would one day enable her to conquer the resolution of Jehangire, from whatever source it might have sprung. She was allowed a miserable stipend of about half a dollar a day for the support of herself and her female slaves. But her spirit rose with her difficulties. She employed herself and her attendants in working pieces of tapestry and embroidery, in painting silks, and inventing and executing female ornaments of every description. Her various manufactures were finished with so much delicacy and skill that they were bought up with the greatest avidity, and became the models of fashion at Delhi and Agra. She was in this way enabled to repair and decorate her residence, and to clothe her slaves in the richest garments; but she spent no part of her newly-acquired wealth upon herself; she continued to dress in the plainest style, as most suitable to her actual condition.

Jehangire heard of her fame in every quarter, and, at length, he was tempted to visit her. He entered her apartment suddenly, and was surprised to find her half reclining on an embroidered sofa, dressed in a plain muslin robe, her slaves, attired in rich brocades, sitting round her, and all industriously employed. The magnificence of the chamber astonished him, as well as the exquisite taste with which it was fitted up.

Without losing her presence of mind for a moment, the fair forlorn rose slowly from the couch, and in silence made the usual obeisance, touching first the ground, and then her forehead, with her right hand. The emperor also remained silent, the tide of former passion rushing upon him while he once more gazed upon her beauty. The result was as she had foreseen. Jehangire folded her in his arms, and the next day orders were given for their nuptials. Her name was changed, by an imperial edict, to Noor-Mahal, or "Light of the Harem," and, from this time, she held undivided sway over her husband. Chaja Aias, her father, was made prime vizier, and exercised the gov ernment of the empire with the talents of a great statesman, leaving a reputation behind him which continues in India to the present day. Many other members of her family were also raised to posts of eminence, of which they proved themselves worthy by their talents and integrity. Noor-Mahal's name was afterwards changed to Noor-Jehan, or "Light of the Empire," — a title which the emperor bestowed upon her to denote the unbounded influence which she exercised over him.

Jehangire wrote his own memoirs, which constitute one of the most interesting pieces of autobiography extant. The story which we have related will not give the reader a very favorable impression of his character; but it is impossible to read his memoirs without concluding that his errors, enormous, criminal as they were in some instances, had their main source in the circumstances of his position, rather than in a bad heart. He was warmly attached to his children, faith-

ful to his bosom friends, *generally* mild towards his enemies, and inexorable in enforcing impartial justice. When his own passions were interested, however, he seemed to recognize no restraint in divine or human law. He was, upon these occasions, the Eastern despot to the full extent of that significant phrase. His insensibility to crime he, no doubt, partly derived from his Tartar origin; but, with all this callousness of conscience, he combined a tenderness of heart that often, when his affections were touched, melted him to tears. We will close this article with an extract from the autobiography of Jehangire, to show with what coolness and plausibility he touches upon the transactions which led to his marriage with the object of his lawless passion.

"Ettemaud-ud-Dowlah, [the title which he had bestowed upon Chaja Aias,] it is almost superfluous to observe, is the father of my consort Noor-Jehan Begum, and of Azof Khan, whom I have appointed my lieutenant-general, with the rank of a commander of five thousand. On Noor-Jehan, however, who is the superior of the four hundred inmates of my harem, I have conferred the rank of a commander of thirty thousand. In the whole empire there is scarcely a city in which this princess has not left some lofty structure or some spacious garden, as a splendid monument of her taste and munificence. As I had then no intention of marriage, she did not originally come into my family, but was betrothed, in the time of my father, to Shere Afkun. But when that chief was killed, I sent for the cazy, and contracted a regular marriage with her, assigning for her dowry the sum of eighty

lacs of ashrefies, [about thirty millions of dollars,] which sum she requested as indispensable for the purchase of jewels, and I granted it without a murmur. I made her a present, besides, of a pearl necklace containing forty beads, each of which had cost me separately forty thousand rupees, (total six hundred and forty thousand dollars.) At the time in which I write this, I may say that the whole concern of my household, whether gold or jewels, is under her sole management. Of my unreserved confidence, indeed, this princess is in entire possession, and I may allege, without a fallacy, that the whole fortune of my empire has been consigned to the disposal of this highly-endowed family; the father being my prime minister, the son my lieutenant-general, with unlimited power, and the daughter the inseparable companion of all my cares."

NADIR SHAH.

The life of Nadir Shah furnishes one of the most remarkable portions of Asiatic history. He rose from the lowest rank of life to be the absolute monarch of Persia, and one of the most successful of Oriental conquerors. His original appellation was Kooli, which means *slave*. He was born in the province of Khorassan, on the 11th of November, 1688. His father was

a tailor, who earned his living by making sheepskin coats and caps. Nadir, when possessed of absolute power, often spoke of his low birth, as Napoleon was accustomed to allude to the time when he was a lieutenant of artillery. When the pride of the royal house of Delhi required that his son, who was to marry a princess of that family, should give an account of his male ancestors for seven generations, the conqueror exclaimed, "Tell them that he is the son of Nadir Shah, the son of the sword, the grandson of the sword, and so on, till they have a descent of seventy generations instead of seven."

Persian historians pass over the early occurrences of Nadir's life. At the age of seventeen, he was taken prisoner by the Usbegs, who made annual incursions into Khorassan; but he effected his escape, after a captivity of four years. He was at one time in the service of a petty chief of his own province, whom he killed, and whose daughter he married. After this he obtained a precarious subsistence by heading a band of robbers, from which occupation he passed, by a transition easy in troubled times, into the employment of the governor of Khorassan. By this officer he was at first raised to rank and command as a reward for his valor, and afterwards degraded and punished with the bastinado, for his insolent and turbulent behavior. Irritated at this disgrace, he left the service, and joined his uncle, who appears to have been a petty chieftain. His violence and ambition soon caused his relative to expel him from his army, and he resumed his trade of a robber, carrying on his depredations on an extended scale.

Circumstances, however, conspired to favor his rise to power. The Afghans had invaded Persia, and made themselves masters of Ispahan; the royal government over the distant provinces was subverted, while that of the conquerors was not established in its place. At such a moment, a brigand, of known valor and experience, could not want followers; and in a short time Nadir found himself the leader of a band of three thousand men, levying large contributions on the inhabitants of his native province. Passing from one robbery to another, and slaying his uncle with his own hand, he daily increased in power and importance, till at length he obtained a pardon from the king, Shah Tamasp, entered his service, and became one of his most efficient supporters.

We may well conceive that when weakness, cruelty, and debauchery, seemed the chief characteristics of their sovereign, and when the nobles were remarkable only for their effeminate vices and their cowardice, a fallen and suffering nation, like that of Persia, should have turned its eyes, with hope, even on such a leader as Nadir Shah. The lowness of his birth, the coarseness of his manners, and the daring though guilty actions of his early life, were all calculated to favor these impressions, as they placed him in complete opposition to those rulers and nobles to whom the people ascribed all their misfortunes.

Shah Tamasp early entertained a great jealousy of Nadir; and, on his disobeying an order to return from an expedition in which he was engaged, that weak monarch ventured to proclaim him a rebel and a traitor. The indignant chief marched against him, and com-

pelled him to submit to such terms as he chose to dictate. From this open rupture may be dated the annihilation of the little power which Tamasp possessed. Nadir continued to treat him with respect till he considered the time as arrived for usurping the throne; but as early as his first expedition to Khorassan, he had begun to prepare the minds of his countrymen for his future elevation. Like many other famous men of the East, he had his visions of future grandeur. He saw in a dream, we are told, a water-fowl and a white fish with four horns. He dreamed that he shot the bird; and, after all his attendants had failed to seize the extraordinary fish, he stretched out his hand and caught it with ease. This was interpreted as a certain presage of his attaining imperial power; and his Persian historian has had no difficulty in discovering, from subsequent events, that the four horns were the kingdoms of Persia, Kharizm, India, and Tartary, all destined to be conquered by this hero. Such trifles are not unworthy of notice; they show the art or superstition of him who uses or believes in them, and portray, better than the most elaborate descriptions, the character of the mind in which they are conceived.

The scene of Nadir's mock submission to his sovereign soon drew to a close. Shah Tamasp was invited to the tent of his general, to share in the pleasures of a feast, which terminated in his being imprisoned and dethroned. The time, however, did not seem to Nadir quite ripe for seizing the crown; and the son of Tamasp, an infant only eight months old, was seated on the throne, Nadir accepting the name and power of regent. He carried on the war against the Turks, and,

after experiencing some reverses, he obliged them to sue for peace. In the mean time, the infant sovereign of Persia died, and Nadir judged the event propitious to his long-cherished design of taking possession of the throne. He summoned a grand convention, consisting of almost every person of rank and consideration in the kingdom, to the number of a hundred thousand, and addressed them in the following terms: "Shah Tamasp and Shah Abbas were your kings, and the princes of their blood are the heirs to the throne. Choose one of them for your sovereign, or some other person, whom you know to be great and virtuous. It is enough for me that I have restored the throne to its glory, and delivered my country from the Afghans, the Turks, and the Russians." He retired, that their deliberations might seem more free, but was soon recalled to hear their unanimous request, that he, who had saved his country, and was alone able to protect it, should accept the crown. He refused this offer, protesting solemnly that the idea of ascending the throne of Persia had never once entered his imagination! The same scene was acted over every day for a month, till the matter ended as probably every one foresaw: Nadir yielded to their solicitations, and mounted the throne.

After completely overthrowing the Afghan power, Nadir undertook an expedition into Hindostan. His march was rapid and successful; nearly all the governors of the provinces through which he passed anticipated the fate of the empire by their submission. He defeated the Mogul emperor in a great battle, and entered his capital of Delhi. Here he found an immense booty, in the wealth of the monarch, and that of his

richest nobles and subjects. All the jewels collected by a long race of sovereigns, and the whole contents of the imperial treasury, fell into his hands; the principal nobles, imitating their monarch, gave up all their money and valuables. After these voluntary gifts, as they were termed, had been received, arrears of revenue were demanded from distant provinces, and heavy contributions were levied on the rich inhabitants of Delhi. The great misery caused by these impositions was augmented by the collectors, who farmed out the right of extortion to men who made immense fortunes by the speculation. Numbers of the wretched inhabitants perished under the blows inflicted to make them reveal their wealth; others committed suicide rather than endure such insults. At length, on the circulation of a report that Nadir was dead, the people of Delhi rose in arms against the Persians. The irritated king brought in his troops from the camp, and ordered a general massacre. Delhi was given up to fire and the sword from sunrise till noon; but, at the solicitation of the unfortunate emperor, the carnage and devastation were then stayed.

Nadir remained at Delhi nearly two months, behaving toward the chief officers of the court with considerable moderation and kindness, although he must have despised their luxurious effeminacy. We learn his sentiments from an anecdote. When conversing, one day, with the vizier, he inquired how many ladies he had: "Eight hundred and fifty," was the reply. "Let a hundred and fifty of our female captives," said Nadir, "be sent to the vizier, who will then be entitled to the high military rank of a mim-bashee, or commander of a thousand."

On his march homeward, his army was literally encumbered with spoil. The value of the treasure which he obtained in India has been variously estimated at a hundred and fifty and three hundred and fifty millions of dollars. A great part of it was in precious stones, of which he was immoderately fond. While on the march, he was informed that several of the most valuable crown jewels had been secreted by some of his followers. He made this a pretext for searching the baggage of every man in the army; some of the soldiers were so enraged that they threw their jewels into the Indus, on the banks of which they were encamped, rather than deliver them to the officers appointed to search. Yet, notwithstanding their murmurs, they submitted, and their not resisting is an extraordinary proof of the subordination which he had established.

Nadir was as impatient of repose as Napoleon. The soldiers, after the Indian expedition, were anxious for rest; but he knew too well the consequences of such an indulgence. He led them across the Oxus, and reduced Bokhara and Kharizm. Thus, in the space of five years, five monarchs had yielded to his arms: the empire of Persia had not only been rescued from a foreign yoke, but its limits had been extended as far as the Oxus to the north, and the Indus to the east; and the haughty soldier by whom all this had been accomplished, promised his exulting subjects that the Turks should soon be driven from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates.

While the army was on its march to Daghestan, an event occurred which cast a dark cloud over the fair prospects then dawning upon Persia, and exhibited, in

the strongest light, the miserable condition of those empires whose fate hangs upon the talents or the caprice of a despot. As Nadir was passing through a forest, a shot from an assassin who had concealed himself behind a tree, wounded him in the hand, and killed his horse. The villain escaped for that time, favored by the thickness of the wood, although he was afterwards taken, and ascertained to have been employed by the chief of a barbarous tribe, hostile to the conqueror. This transaction made an indelible impression on the mind of Nadir. From the day when his life was attempted, he entertained suspicions of his eldest son; he summoned him to his presence, threw him into prison, and caused his eyes to be put out. He was, however, so struck with remorse the moment after this cruel deed was perpetrated, that, in a paroxysm of rage, he ordered fifty noblemen, who had witnessed the act, to be put to death, on the pretext that they should have offered their lives as a sacrifice to save the eyes of a prince who was the glory of his country. From this time, the monarch became gloomy and irritable. "It is not *my* eyes that you have put out," said his son, the moment after the deed was performed, "but those of Persia." The keen reproach, and the prophetic truth of this answer, sunk deep into his father's soul; and we may believe the Persian historian, who affirms that he never afterwards knew happiness, nor desired that others should enjoy it.

His actions, after this tragic event, were little better than deeds of horror, save only the contest which he carried on against the Turks for three years. Even in this he displayed none of the energy and heroic spirit

which marked his former wars. His conduct to his own subjects, during the last five years of his reign, has been described, even by a partial historian of his own country, as exceeding in barbarity all that has been recorded of the most bloody tyrants. The acquisition of the wealth of India had, at first, filled his mind with generous and patriotic feelings. He had proclaimed that no taxes should be collected for three years. But the possession of riches had soon its usual effect of creating a desire for more; and, while his enormous treasures were hoarded in the castle of Kelat, which, with all the fears of a miser and a despot, he continually labored to render inaccessible, he extorted, with inflexible rigor, a large revenue from his subjects, with which he not only paid his armies, but added to his golden heaps.

On his accession to the throne, he had attacked the religion of his country by suppressing the Sheah sect in favor of the Sunees, although the former were the orthodox, and comprised a great majority of the Persians. He knew that this act had made him unpopular among the priests, and that they would probably labor to spread disaffection. This led him to entertain suspicions of those who still adhered to the tenets of the Sheahs; in other words, nearly all the natives of Persia. The troops on whom he placed most reliance, were the Afghans and Tartars, who were of the Sunee persuasion. Their leaders were his principal favorites, and every pretext was seized upon to put to death such Persian chiefs as possessed either influence or power. These proceedings had the natural effect of producing rebellion in various quarters, which excited the violence

of Nadir to outrageous fury. His executions were no longer confined to individuals; the inhabitants of whole cities were massacred, and, to use the words of his historian, "Men left their abodes, and took up their habitation in caverns and deserts, in the hope of escaping from his savage ferocity." There can be little doubt that he was at this time in a state of frenzy which amounted to insanity. At length, some of the principal officers of his court, learning that their names were on the list of proscribed victims, resolved to save themselves by sacrificing him. Four of them, accordingly, watching their time while he was asleep in his tent, rushed by his guards, and attacked him. He sprang from his couch, and killed two of them; but a blow from one of the others laid him lifeless on the earth. Such was the end of this sanguinary despot — an event which occurred on the 20th of June, 1747.

"The character of Nadir," says Sir John Malcolm, "is, perhaps, exhibited in its truest colors in those impressions which the memory of his actions has left upon the minds of his countrymen. They speak of him as a deliverer and a destroyer; but, while they expatiate with pride upon his deeds of glory, they dwell with more pity than horror upon the cruel enormities which disgraced the latter years of his reign; and neither his crimes, nor the attempt he made to abolish their religion, have subdued their gratitude and veneration for the hero who revived in the breasts of his degraded countrymen a sense of their former state, and restored Persia to her independence as a nation."

When his mind was in its most frenzied state, he continued to brood over those plans which he had

cherished in his happier days. He anxiously desired to encourage trade, and thought that his country would not only become wealthier, but more powerful, if he could form a navy. By the aid of an Englishman, he began the execution of this project on the Caspian Sea; but the jealousy of Russia was excited, and led to the defeat of the plan in this quarter. He ordered ships to be built on the Persian Gulf, and timber for that purpose was transported above six hundred miles, over a country which had neither roads nor carriages. But this part of the project also proved abortive.

Soon after his return from India, Nadir commanded that the four Evangelists should be translated into Persian; and when this work was accomplished in a very incorrect manner by some Romish and Armenian priests, who wrote under the superintendence of his secretary, he summoned a number of Christian priests, Jewish rabbis, and Mahometan moollahs, to his presence. Extracts from the imperfect translation were read to him, and he amused himself and some of his hearers with ludicrous remarks on the mysterious parts of the Christian faith. The tenets of the Jews, and the traditions of the Mahometans, were treated with the same freedom, and he broke up the assembly with a declaration that, if God spared him, he would make a religion much better than any which mankind had yet seen.

We shall close our account of this extraordinary man with an anecdote, which shows how well he understood the character of his subjects. A Persian merchant travelling from Cabool, had been robbed in a plain near Nishapore, and carried his complaint to the

shah. "Was there no one near but the robbers?" asked Nadir. "None," was the reply. "Were there no trees, stones, or bushes?" "Yes," said the man, "there was one large, solitary tree, under the shade of which I was resting when I was attacked." Nadir, on hearing this, affected a furious anger, and gave orders that two executioners should proceed and flog the tree every morning, till it either restored the merchant's property, or revealed the names of the robbers. The mandate of a sovereign of Persia is always law; that of Nadir was as irrevocable as fate. The executioners went upon their duty, and when the tree had suffered daily flagellation for about a week, all the stolen goods were found one morning at its root. The alarmed robbers, having seen such blows inflicted on an inanimate substance, trembled at the thought of the horrible punishment that awaited them should they ever be discovered. When the result was reported to Nadir, he smiled, and said, "I knew what flogging that tree would produce."

AURUNGZEBE.

This sovereign was the last of the Mogul emperors of Hindostan who displayed the talent and energy of a warrior. He was the grandson of Jehangire, and was born on the 22d of October, 1618. He appears, at an early age, to have aspired to the throne, and, in order to prevent the suspicion of his ambitious designs,

he affected all the devotion and austerity of a religious mendicant. By his cunning and prudence he gained the esteem of his father; but his elder brother, Dara, who saw through his hypocrisy, was accustomed to say, "Of all my brothers, I fear none but this teller of beads." When but thirteen years of age, Aurungzebe held the nominal command of the army, and, under the guidance of an experienced general, showed the beginning of that ardor in the work of destruction which distinguished his riper years. The emperor, Shah Jehan, dreading the consequences of discord among his sons, thought it safest to remove them from his court, and Aurungzebe was sent to govern the province of Deccan, where he made a treacherous attempt to surprise the king of Golconda, but without effect.

The declining health of the emperor began to excite alarm. Under an Oriental despotism, every son of the reigning monarch looks upon his brother either as a butcher or a victim, and sees but one choice between the throne and the grave. The usual policy of Oriental fear is to educate the royal youths to effeminacy and imbecility in the seraglio; but the sons of Shah Jehan had been led into action, and indulged with the possession of power. They were not all men of high capacity, but they were all ardent, brave, and aspiring, and each one thought himself worthy of empire. Dara, the eldest, a person of a frank and sincere disposition, gallant and aspiring, but impetuous, thoughtless, and rash, was destined to the sovereignty by his father, and was generally kept near his person. Suja, the second, who administered the government of Bengal, possessed more prudence and discretion than his elder

brother, but was far inferior in those qualities to the deep and dissembling Aurungzebe. Morad, the youngest, was courageous, affable, and generous, and, in consequence, much beloved by the people, but credulous and weak. The illness of the emperor being regarded as mortal, Dara, without hesitation, seized upon the government, and, with his usual precipitation and violence, began to show what he apprehended from his brothers, and what his brothers had to expect from him. All communication with them was interdicted, on pain of death; their agents and effects at the capital were seized, and all officers suspected of attachment toward them were displaced.

Aurungzebe practised the deepest dissimulation. He persuaded Morad that his views were directed toward heaven, and not toward a throne; but as his brothers Dara and Suja were unworthy to reign, he was desirous, from friendship, to aid him with all his resources; after which, the only boon which he would crave would be to retire into obscurity, and devote his life to the service of God. Troops were levied, and a civil war began. Dara was fortunate enough to defeat Suja; but, in a great battle at Samongher, he was completely overthrown by the army of Aurungzebe and Morad. The conquerors entered Agra in triumph, and Aurungzebe made his father a prisoner of state in his own palace, and secured the interest of the nobles for himself. His next project was to make himself master of the person of his brother Morad, who had begun to look with suspicion and alarm upon his designs, and even, it is said, to meditate an act which might free him from so dangerous a rival. The saga-

city of Aurungzebe enabled him to discover the intended blow. He invited Morad to an entertainment, tempted him with a bottle of Shiraz wine, made him intoxicated, and then put him in fetters, and confined him in the castle of Agra. He next marched against his two other brothers, and obliged them to retreat to a distance for safety. His own son, Mahmoud, revolting from him, was sent into confinement, where he died.

The reign of Aurungzebe properly begins at this point; but the civil war continued. Dara, being treacherously delivered up to him, was put to death, as well as his son and grandson, who were despatched by poison. Morad was publicly beheaded, under a pretext of justice: Suja, the only remaining brother, took refuge with the king of Arracan; and, forming a plot to surprise that monarch, whom he suspected of a treacherous design against himself, he was put to death, and his whole family was afterwards extirpated. Such are the fruits of Eastern despotism. Aurungzebe, although in peaceable possession of the throne, could not stifle remorse for the crimes by which he obtained it. He imposed upon himself a rigorous penance, eating only barley-bread, herbs, and fruits, and drinking nothing but water. This diet was supposed to have been the cause of a dangerous illness into which he fell, and which gave him an occasion for the display of that cool resolution and presence of mind for which he was ever distinguished. His treatment of his deposed father was so apparently submissive and respectful, that at length he obtained the old man's pardon and paternal blessing. Shah Jehan died in 1666, at a good old age; and although Aurung-

zebe has been accused of hastening his death by poison, there is no adequate reason for suspecting him of this superfluous crime.

He exhibited his ambitious and warlike spirit by the conquests of Visapour, Golconda, the Carnatic, Assam, and Bengal, and by clearing the mouths of the Ganges of the Portuguese pirates who had long infested them. His reputation for power and wealth caused embassies to be sent to him from all the neighboring nations, as well as from the European powers who wished to obtain commercial advantages in his dominions. Through apprehensions of the hostile designs of his sons against him, and against each other, he passed most of his time in his camp, which was in reality a moving city, and is described by the French traveller Bernier, who followed it from Delhi to Cashmere. The guard of cavalry consisted of 35,000 men; that of infantry, of 10,000; the horses, mules, and elephants, in the camp, were estimated at 150,000; the camels and oxen at 100,000; the men, between 300,000 and 400,000. Almost all Delhi followed the court, whose magnificence supported its traders and artisans.

One event of the reign of Aurungzebe, which took place in 1665, is ludicrous in itself, though highly significant, as an instance of the power of superstition among the weak and credulous Hindoos. Of the professors of devotion and penance called Fakirs, one class is distinguished by wandering about the country in crowds, almost naked, pretending to live by begging, but in reality stealing, robbing, and murdering. In the territory of Manwar, or Judpore, a rich old woman began to enlarge her liberality toward the Fakirs. The

sturdy beggars crowded around her by thousands, and, not satisfied with the alms of their pious patroness, made spoil of the neighboring country. The people rose in arms repeatedly against the saintly plunderers, but were defeated with great slaughter. An idea of enchantment began to prevail. The people regarded the old woman as a sorceress, and believed that she compounded for her followers a horrid mess, which rendered them invincible by mortal weapons. The Fakirs, finding themselves, under the auspices of the dame, too formidable to be resisted, assembled in great numbers, and spread their devastations to a wide extent. The rajah of Manwar attacked them, but was defeated. Growing presumptuous from unexpected success, they resolved to strike a blow at the capital, and an army of 20,000 of them took up their march, with the old woman at their head. Within five days' journey of Agra, they encountered an army of imperial troops, commanded by the collector of the district. This force they overthrew; and now, grasping in imagination the whole wealth and authority of the empire, the old woman was immediately proclaimed empress of Hindostan!

Aurungzebe now felt the danger to be serious; for the soldiers were affected with the superstitions of the people, and it was hazardous, to the last degree, to permit them to engage with these sainted banditti, who were believed to possess magic arts by which they might paralyze the bodies of their enemies. His prompt sagacity invented an antidote to the religious contagion. The sanctity of the emperor was as famous as that of the old woman; and he pretended that, by means of incantation, he had discovered a counter-

enchantment. He wrote, with his own hand, certain mysterious words upon slips of paper, one of which, carried upon the point of a spear before each of the squadrons, he declared would render impotent the spells of the enchantress. The emperor was believed; the counter-spells were carried to battle; and, though the Fakirs fought with great desperation, they were utterly cut to pieces. Such was the end of the "old woman's war" — one of the strangest that history records. "I find," said Aurungzebe, "that too much religion among the vulgar is as dangerous as too little in the monarch."

Aurungzebe died in February, 1707, in his 89th year. The repose of his latter years was disturbed by the revolts and quarrels of his sons; but he retained his great power to the last. By his will he recommended to his sons a division of his dominions; and with his death terminated the brilliant epoch of the Mogul power in India. He was one of the greatest sovereigns of his time, and possessed many qualities which fitted him for the government of a great empire. He was sober, resolute, and enterprising; and, though he never scrupled in the selection of his means for acquiring power, like Augustus, he exercised it, for the most part, with mildness. He was, however, culpably indulgent to his governors and omrahs, whom he allowed to oppress the people; saying, in excuse, that God would, in his own time, punish them if they did evil. So productive was his revenue, that, at his death, it is said to have amounted annually to a hundred and eighty-four millions of dollars!

BRITISH INDIA.

Hyder Ali.

The first Europeans who obtained any dominion in Hindostan were the Portuguese. Vasco de Gama arrived, with three ships, at Calicut, on the Malabar coast, in May, 1498. The Portuguese soon acquired extensive power in the country, and, within twenty-five years, Malacca fell into their hands, which gave them the

command of the trade of the Indian archipelago. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the English, Dutch, and French began to make settlements along the coast of Hindostan, and the Portuguese lost their dominions almost as rapidly as they had acquired them. The commencement of the British power in Bengal dates from the year 1652, when, through the influence of a medical gentleman who had been sent to the court of the Great Mogul, where he had successfully applied his professional skill, a license was granted, permitting the English East India Company to trade to an unlimited extent. The first settlement made by them in the province was Hoogly, on the river of that name, above the present site of Calcutta. In 1698, the English factory was removed to the latter place, and Fort William was built. Shortly after, the English obtained authority from the Mogul to purchase lands in the neighborhood, and rapidly extended their acquisitions. They fortified their posts, became involved in wars with the natives, and obtained possession of one district after another. The chief conquests were made by Lord Clive, who may be regarded as the founder of the British power in India.

The most formidable enemy whom the British encountered in India was Hyder Ali Khan, a soldier of fortune, who rose by his talents to sovereign power. He was born at Dinavelly, in the province of Mysore; and, after some military service under his father, who was a petty chief of the country, he joined his brother in an alliance with the French, and introduced European discipline among his troops. He became general-in-chief of the forces of Cinoas, who then reigned at

Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore, as a vassal rajah of the Mogul. Having quarrelled with the grand vizier of his master, he marched against the capital, and obliged Cinoas not only to deliver the vizier into his power, but also to appoint him regent. The rajah was now a mere puppet in the hands of Hyder, and, after a few turns of fortune, he pensioned him off, and assumed the sovereignty of Mysore in 1761.

From this moment he applied himself diligently and successfully to the increase of his power, and within five years saw himself the undisputed master of a territory comprising 70,000 square miles, and affording an immense revenue. His encroachments led to a coalition against him of the Mahrattas, the nizam of the Deccan, and the British East India Company; but he found means not only to break up this confederacy, but to engage the nizam in war against the British, in 1767. The war was prosecuted to the disadvantage of the English for two years, when Hyder, by a bold and able stroke, placed himself in a condition to prescribe terms of peace. By skilful manœuvres, he drew the British troops to a considerable distance from Madras, and then, at the head of a body of 6000 cavalry, made a forced march of three days, and suddenly appeared at the very gates of the capital. The rich villas of the neighborhood, the town and all its mercantile wealth, lay at his mercy, and the government were compelled to agree to a treaty, by which the conquests on both sides were restored, and the British stipulated to assist Hyder in all his defensive wars. The bad faith with which this treaty was observed by the British, brought the most terrible calamities upon

the country. In 1770, the Mahrattas invaded Mysore, and threw Hyder into great difficulties: he appealed to the treaty, and demanded aid from the British; but they did nothing except to remain neutral, and Hyder was obliged to make peace on disadvantageous terms.

In 1774, the dissensions among the Mahrattas enabled him to regain what he had lost, and he did much to restore order, improve the revenue, and increase the strength of his kingdom; but soon after, being again menaced with hostilities from the Mahrattas, he renewed his application to the British for assistance, and was again disappointed. Thoroughly disgusted by the conduct of his treacherous allies, he turned against them, and formed a coalition with the nizam and the Mahrattas. The supineness of the British was equal to their bad faith, and they were reposing in confident security, when Hyder burst like a thunder-storm upon them, with an army of 100,000 men. This event has been commemorated by the eloquence of Mr. Burke, in one of the most brilliant and highly-wrought pictures to be found in the whole compass of English rhetoric.

"When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either would sign no convention, or whom no treaty and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country, possessed by these incorrigible and predestined criminals, a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capable of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those against whom the faith which

holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and, compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, — without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or the sacredness of function, — fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers and the trampling of pursuing horses, — were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities; but, escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws

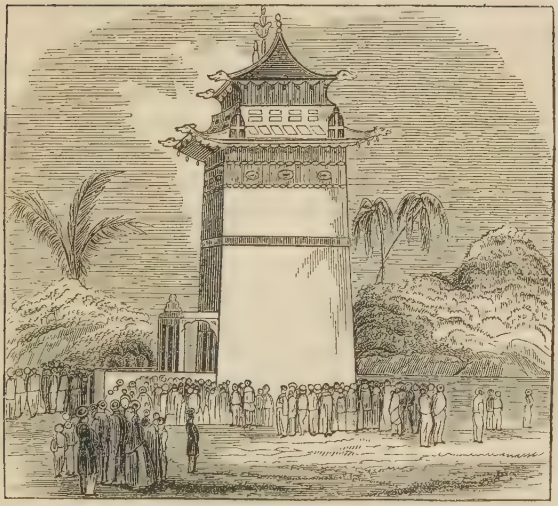
of famine. For eighteen months, without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that, when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic, for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead, uniform silence reigned over the whole region."

A new governor having come into office at Madras, he proposed terms of peace; but Hyder declined his overtures with a dignified allusion to the breach of faith which he had already experienced. The war continued until Madras was reduced to the most frightful state of famine, and the entire ruin of the district seemed at hand, when the sudden death of this formidable chieftain, in 1782, relieved the English at an unexpected moment. His son, Tippoo Saib, succeeded him. He was a prince of high military talent, and had already distinguished himself by several victories over the Mahrattas and English. About a year after ascending the throne, he made peace with the English; but, always regarding them with jealousy, he lost no opportunity of thwarting their schemes of encroachment. War broke out again in 1790, and was carried on with great vigor on both sides. Notwithstanding the courage and resources of Tippoo, he was compelled to sign a treaty, two years after, by which he lost half his dominions.

For several years he occupied himself in a scheme

for uniting all the native chiefs against the British power in India. He opened a negotiation with the French for aid in this design. The knowledge of his intentions caused the British to declare war against him, and invade his dominions. A British army laid siege to Seringapatam, his capital, and that city was taken by storm on the 4th of May, 1799. Tippoo was killed, and his dominions were disposed of in such a manner as to secure all the benefits of the sovereignty to the British. He was a very popular sovereign, and his memory is revered to this day in his country. In the days of his prosperity, he was enormously rich, his money and treasures being estimated at the value of nearly four hundred millions of dollars.

THE CHINESE.



Gate of Pekin.

The origin of the Chinese, like that of other Asiatic nations, is lost in the depths of the most remote antiquity. They have a fabulous chronology, similar to that of the Hindoos, and equally extravagant. It includes dynasties of monarchs each of whom held the sceptre during 18,000 years; but after this, their lives

dwindled to so narrow a span, that the reigns of nine monarchs are comprehended in 45,600 years. The ten ages which elapsed from Tan-kou, the first man, to Confucius, are computed by some of their writers to comprise 96,000,000 of years. It is proper, however, to state, that the Chinese treat their own fabulous records with contempt. The first dawn of authentic history commences with Fo-hi, in the year 2953 before Christ — a period which accords sufficiently with the best established chronologies. Even after this date, the Chinese annals are tinged by fable, and it is not till the accession of Yu, of the Hia dynasty, that reigns of the ordinary duration indicate that their narrative is at length placed on a solid basis.

When the Chinese first settled in the province of Shen-see, they are said to have been almost complete savages. They were strangers to all the arts, to every form of social union, and to every idea which could raise the man above the brute. But the means by which they were initiated in the useful arts, and gradually rose to that measure of improvement which gave them so distinguished a place among the Oriental nations, form the chief theme of their early history. In this retrospect, the most remarkable circumstance is, that the prince is commemorated as the sole inventor and teacher of every science and craft — from astronomy to agriculture, from preparing the machinery of war to manufacturing musical instruments. Although it is impossible, in these representations, not to suspect some disposition to flatter the throne, yet it really appears, by recent observations among the chiefs, both of Africa and the South Sea Islands, that sovereigns,

in this early stage of society, take the lead in many concerns which are afterwards advantageously left to the zeal or ingenuity of private individuals. As the narrative becomes more modern, we find the monarch employing such of his subjects as he considers best qualified, to preside over the different branches of national economy.

In remote times, however, it is obvious that China was not governed upon those despotic principles which afterwards acquired so complete an ascendency. There is nowhere, indeed, any trace of republican institutions in that country; but in all the early successions, the crown is represented as purely elective. On the death of the reigning prince, the people assembled and chose the person whom they judged best fitted to succeed him, and who was usually a minister, not a son, of the deceased monarch.

Fo-hi made the first step towards the invention of writing: yet this consisted merely in the formation of the koua, which comprised eight lines varying in length, and imitated from those which appear on the back of a dragon. These lines, being arranged into clusters of two and two, formed sixty-four combinations, capable of expressing that number of ideas. This work has been an object of the deepest veneration among the Chinese, who believe it to possess such a spiritual and mysterious virtue as to contain the germ of all things. Even the great Confucius made it the subject of an elaborate commentary; and yet its whole merit seems to consist in being the first approach to an art of such vast importance as literary composition.

For many centuries, China, which we have been

accustomed to view as a peaceful region, under the absolute sway of one ruler, was partitioned into a multitude of petty states, and agitated by the most furious intestine commotions. At the earliest stage of this epoch, it was divided among twenty-one governors. It would afford little entertainment to follow the Chinese historians through the chaos of civil conflict and revolution which filled an interval of nearly five hundred years. One fact deserves especial notice. Literature and the intellectual powers, instead of being neglected amid these scenes of confusion, were cultivated with great ardor and success. Confucius and Mencius, in particular, attained the highest eminence. Their works gave to the Chinese mind a stamp which it has ever since retained, and have been considered, down to this day, as the rule of action and the fountain of wisdom. The appearance of such men during this period of turbulence may, at first view, excite surprise; yet it is not inconsistent with the general train of human events. A uniform tenor of life, and a monotonous circle of objects, are by no means favorable to the development of the higher intellectual faculties. Amid sudden changes and revolutions, attended by striking scenes, the powers of thought and invention are roused. Such agitations produce activity in the soul, and impel it to extremes, both of good and evil.

Chi-hoang-ti, the first emperor of the Tsin dynasty, completed the subjection of the independent princes, and may be regarded, in some degree, as the founder of the Chinese empire as it now exists. He erected, or at least enlarged and finished, that astonishing work, the great wall, by which the northern frontier was for

a long time defended against the irruptions of the Tartars. If we may believe the Chinese historians, this emperor committed a most stupendous act of Vandalism, by ordering all the books of the learned, including those of Confucius, to be cast into the flames, in order to extinguish the memory of every thing prior to himself. About two centuries before Christ, the race of Tsin was succeeded by that of Han, which filled one of the most celebrated periods of Chinese history. It was about this time that the Tartars began to give serious and constant trouble to their more civilized neighbors, by invading the frontiers, and the Chinese were frequently under the necessity of buying them off with tribute. Four centuries later, China became divided into three states; but these were subsequently united. In consequence of the troubles which had been caused by the interference of women and eunuchs during this period, a species of Salic law was established, excluding females from the throne and all participation in political authority; consequently, we meet with no reigning queens or empresses in Chinese history. In the year 416, the empire was divided into two kingdoms, Nankin being the capital of the southern, and Honan of the northern, division. In 585, China was again united into one empire. The details of its history, for a long period, offer little that would interest the general reader. The Tartars, under Kublai Khan, effected the conquest of the empire in the thirteenth century.

The introduction of Christianity into China dates from the seventh century, when the Nestorians are believed to have visited the empire. The Portuguese

were the first European nation who attempted to open a maritime intercourse with that country in modern times; and a number of their vessels visited Canton in 1517. A Portuguese embassy was allowed to proceed to Pekin, and that nation was permitted to take possession of the Island of Macao, which they hold at the present day. The Spaniards followed the Portuguese, and introduced Jesuit missionaries into the empire. They visited most of the chief cities of the empire, and fixed their abode at Nankin, then the greatest and most enlightened city of China. Their scientific knowledge procured for them great fame and influence. They renounced the costume of bonzes, or holy men, which they had first assumed,—as such persons were not only despised by the grandees, but even considered as the ministers of vulgar superstition,—and assumed the habit of the learned, from whom the noble and great officers are chosen. Their attainments in physical science, which in Europe would have been deemed altogether secondary, appeared almost miraculous in the eyes even of the most accomplished Chinese. The mandarins, at the same time, seem to have possessed a degree of good sense which enabled them to appreciate the philosophical principles of the missionaries, especially when they were confirmed by experiments. They themselves, indeed, had an observatory with very fine instruments, in which an astronomer was constantly stationed to report every change which took place in the heavens, and the events which it portended. But they firmly believed that the earth was a level plain, with the heaven rising in an arch above it; that night was caused by the sun's retiring behind a mountain; and

that eclipses took place in consequence of the god Holochan's covering the sun with his right hand, and the moon with his left. They were exceedingly surprised when they were told that the earth was globular; that its opposite side was inhabited, and that its shadow, intercepting the sun's rays, caused the moon to be eclipsed. Great was their wonder on being informed that the former of these luminaries was larger than the earth; but on learning that the stars were larger also, their amazement knew no bounds. One great doctor at length exclaimed, "You may consider us Tartars and barbarians, for you begin where we end."

The Spanish Jesuits enjoyed a long period of favor at court, and even converted several persons of the imperial family to Christianity; yet, with this exception, they do not boast of any great success in diffusing their religion. Although, with an overheated zeal, they dashed the idols of the Chinese in pieces, without giving any deadly offence, yet, when they attempted to substitute a purer faith in the place of idolatry, they were met by the coolest indifference. While all the other Oriental nations had some strong religious impressions, the learned in China made it their boast not to worship any god, either false or true, and to take no concern in what might happen after this life. Their veneration was exclusively bestowed on their ancient sages, in whose honor alone they conceived that temples ought to be erected. To this was added the greatest alarm and displeasure at every innovation. The result was, that the whole body of the Chinese literati assumed a hostile attitude to the European missionaries, and opposed their attempts to introduce a new belief. Among

the charges brought against them, was that of being great talkers and mountebanks, which is admitted by the Jesuits themselves to be true to a considerable extent. It was added, that they sought to gain converts rather by the display of European curiosities than by arguments; and here, too, the missionaries seem unable wholly to deny that watches, harpsichords, looking-glasses, and tweezers, had involved them in this reproach. These hostile feelings continued to increase till, on a particular occasion, they burst forth unrestrained. One of the chief functions of the Chinese tribunal of astronomy, was to fix an auspicious day for the performance of any great public duty—a choice which its members were supposed to be fully qualified to make, by viewing the aspect of the heavens. The missionaries, in undertaking such an office, somewhat merited the catastrophe in which it involved them. One of the princes having died, it was their part to name the most proper day and hour for his interment. They undertook the task; but some time after, the empress-mother, and next the emperor himself, died. The charge was then immediately urged that the Christians, instead of the favorable day, which they were bound to fix, had named one that lay under the most malignant influence, and had thus involved the realm in these dreadful calamities. This ruined the Jesuits; four of the chief among them were thrown into dungeons, where one of them perished, and the remainder were expelled from China; and, although the surviving prisoners were released afterwards, and restored to a degree of favor, the success of their mission was at an end.

We shall pass over the attempts of the Dutch to obtain a footing in the empire, and give a sketch of the more successful undertakings of the French. Louis XIV., ambitious of every sort of greatness, viewed with envy the extraordinary influence which England and Holland had obtained by trade and manufactures; and he spared no exertion to raise his kingdom also to eminence in these pursuits. The expeditions undertaken, with this view, into distant regions, were guided by that mixed spirit of religion and science which prevailed at his court, and particularly distinguished the order of the Jesuits. A remarkable mission of this nature was sent, in 1685, to Siam, accompanied by Tachard, Le Comte, Gerbillon, and Bouvet. These distinguished persons were instructed, when their primary object should be attained, to make an effort to penetrate into China, with a view both of opening a mercantile intercourse, and of diffusing the light of Christianity. After encountering a variety of adventures, they made their way to Pekin, where they were graciously received at court, and performed the *ko-tou*, or act of adoration to the emperor, by beating their foreheads nine times against the ground. He requested to know whether there was any favor which they were desirous to obtain, bidding them freely ask it. The missionaries, who seem to have been no strangers to the arts of a court, answered, with French cleverness, that their only wish was to lift up their hands daily to the true God in prayers for his majesty's prosperity. This discreet reply pleased the emperor, and the Frenchmen were kindly and hospitably treated.

From this time the missionaries, who were able men,

and well acquainted with the sciences, acquired a great ascendency at the court of China. The enlightened mind of Kang-hi appreciated their superiority to his own people in various branches of knowledge; he became their pupil, and took regular lessons from them. He assigned them a spot, within the precincts of his palace, for building a church and convent, furnishing materials, and even money, to assist in its construction. It is true that the importunity of the Li-pou tribunal, and of some leading mandarins, once extorted from him a decree, prohibiting the exercise of Christianity; but, on the urgent representations of the foreigners and their friends, it was soon rescinded. The strangers were also employed in various important offices, for which their superior knowledge fitted them. They were formed into detachments, which proceeded through the several provinces of the empire, and even its subject territories in Thibet and Tartary, to make a complete survey of those regions, and draw a map of them upon scientific principles. The Frenchmen proved also extremely serviceable in conducting the negotiation with Russia, and Father Gerbillon accompanied the commission which was sent to the frontier to fix the boundaries of the two empires. Numerous individuals of the imperial household became converts, and made an open profession of Christianity.

The intelligence of these circumstances excited an extraordinary interest in France, where a sort of *Chinomania* sprang up and continued for some time. During its prevalence, the most extravagant stories respecting the Chinese empire were implicitly believed. Numerous additional missionaries followed in the train of those

who had so successfully made their way in that country. This state of the public mind gave rise to a singular imposition. When Le Comte returned home, he was surprised to hear of the existence of a Chinese princess in Paris, who was making a distinguished figure in that gay capital. This princess, who claimed the highest rank in her own country, called herself Couronné, a name which no real Chinese could pronounce. Her story was as follows: She had embarked for Japan, with a view to a matrimonial connection, and had been captured, first by a Dutch and then by a French vessel; by the latter she was brought to Europe; and, after much cruel treatment, had been left in a state of total destitution. Being able, however, to pronounce the word *Pe-king*, she attracted notice, and soon managed to learn sufficient broken French to tell her story. Such a novelty brought her at once into notice; she was the "lioness" of Paris, and nobody thought of questioning her veracity. Ladies of rank took her under their protection, and not only relieved her wants, but introduced her into the first circles of society, where she was received with all the respect due to her illustrious birth! Even poems were composed in celebration of her story.

Le Comte, who had never heard of such a name as Couronné in the East, readily suspected the fraud. The whole story was contradictory to Chinese manners. Princesses of that country, so far from taking voyages by sea, scarcely leave their apartments. For a Chinese princess to go to Japan in search of a husband, was as little likely as that the Duchess of Orleans should set out on an expedition to wed the chief of Oonalaska.

Le Comte did not hesitate to announce his suspicions. The Marquis de Croissi insisted on arranging an interview, by which the lady's pretensions might be brought to the test. She could not refuse, though she deemed it necessary to impeach the honesty of Le Comte. When the day had arrived, she was not to be found; but, after a diligent search, her place of retreat was discovered. Finding it impossible to evade the scrutiny, she proceeded to face the traveller with the utmost coolness and intrepidity. The first look removed every shadow of doubt from the mind of Le Comte; her features, her air, her gait, had in them nothing Chinese. She immediately began conversing with fluency, in broken French, but without the least mixture of any thing akin to the Chinese idiom, and pronouncing, with perfect ease, sounds which no native of China can utter. She talked of having travelled, in less than three days, from Nankin to Pekin, a distance of more than six hundred miles; and she described gold coins which were never used in the empire. Le Comte wrote some Chinese characters on a paper, and placed it in her hand; she held the writing upside down, and pretended to read it, uttering with rapidity words entirely without meaning. He then spoke to her in Chinese, to which she replied in her own gibberish. Having thus gone through her part, she boldly insisted that she had stood the trial triumphantly, and that the insinuations of Le Comte against her arose from pure malignity. So reluctant are mankind to be awaked from an agreeable illusion, that she continued to have adherents, even after the fullest exposure of the fraud.

The prosperity of the missionaries ceased with the

reign of their protector, Kang-hi. His successor was superstitiously attached to the laws and institutions of China, and open to those complaints against innovation which the mandarins were ever ready to prefer. The missionaries were all banished from the country except those at Pekin, who were necessary for the construction of the calendar, and these were not allowed to teach their religion. The Chinese converts, of the imperial blood, were exiled to a desolate region in Tartary, yet, continuing constant to the Christian faith amid all their sufferings, they were brought back and confined in dungeons. Under the emperor Kien-long, an enlightened prince, who acceded to the throne in 1736, Christianity again flourished: a college was established at Pekin, for its propagation, and four young princes became converts. But persecutions were soon renewed, and the better judgment and feelings of Kien-long were overpowered by the united voice of the tribunals and great mandarins. A new decree was issued, and Christianity was finally suppressed.

The British had little success in their early dealings with the Chinese. An embassy for commercial purposes was sent by that government to Pekin, in 1793, which led to no results of importance. Another, in 1816, was still more unfortunate, being dismissed abruptly from the capital on the very day of its arrival, owing to the disregard of a point of etiquette by the British envoy. A few years since, that nation became involved in hostilities with the Chinese, from a cause which had hardly been foreseen — the opium trade. The Chinese government, being determined to prohibit the introduction of that commodity into the empire,

seized and destroyed, as contraband, an immense amount of it, belonging to British merchants. The British demanded an indemnity, which being refused, they bombarded Canton, and forced the inhabitants to ransom it for six millions of dollars. Hostilities were continued till 1843, when a treaty was concluded, providing for the payment of the indemnity, and the cession to the British of the island of Hong-Kong, on the coast of China. By this treaty, also, several ports of China are thrown open to all nations; and the probable result will be, an extended intercourse of the European nations with that empire; which can hardly fail to bring about, in process of time, important changes in its social and political institutions.

The present emperor of China, Taou-kwang, was born in 1782, and is a grandson of Kien-long, already mentioned. He succeeded his profligate father, Kea-king, in 1820, upon which occasion he issued a proclamation, of which the following is an extract: —

"My sacred and indulgent father had, in the year that he began to rule alone, silently settled that the divine utensil, the throne, should devolve on my contemptible person. I, knowing the feebleness of my virtue, at first felt much afraid I should not be competent to the office; but on reflecting that the sages, my ancestors, have left to posterity their plans; that his late majesty has laid the duty on me, — and Heaven's throne should not be long vacant, — I have done violence to my feelings, and forced myself to intermit awhile my heartfelt grief, that I may with reverence obey the unalterable decree; and on the 27th of the 8th moon, October 3d, I purpose devoutly to announce

Taou-Kwang.

the event to heaven, to earth, to my ancestors, and to the gods of the land, and of the grain, and shall then sit down on the imperial throne. Let the next year be the first of Taou-kwang."

The reign of this emperor has not been marked with great events, excepting those already mentioned. He has several sons; his fourth, the heir apparent, was born in 1831.

THE WAHABEES.

The wide and arid province of Nedjid, in the centre of Arabia, was not only the first cradle of Islamism, but the country where, in after ages, the doctrine of Mahomet remained most exempt from adulteration. The roving members of the tribes of Anaksse, of Kaibar and Tai, scattered in small communities over an extended and sterile surface, had but little communication with each other, and no intercourse with strangers. They were neither sufficiently numerous nor stationary to breed religious ferments in their own bosoms, and they lived too far removed from foreign influence to receive the infection of new and heretical doctrines from without. Their erratic mode of life allowed neither time nor inclination to burden, with idle speculations and difficulties, the simplicity of their original creed, nor to establish a cumbrous hierarchy and a complicated ritual. The text of the Prophet was their only rule, the surface of the desert their only temple, and the sheik, or leader, of each tribe its only priest. Constant motion, to which the stream owes its limpidity, preserved the faith of the Arabs from alloy, and their practices from corruption; they transmitted the Koran to their posterity, as they had received it from their ancestors, in all its primitive purity, unchanged by expla-

nations, and unperverted by comments. It is true that the very circumstance of their rejecting the distinctive forms of any particular mode of worship facilitated their assimilating with whatever sect they were casually associated, either in the pursuits of business or by pleasure. The ramification of Islamism, to whose shade the care of their flocks or the conduct of their caravans brought them nearest, was that under which they outwardly ranged themselves.

The lapse of time wrought material changes in the doctrines of Islamism; but whatever abhorrence or contempt might be felt for the absurd dogmas and superstitious practices which these innovations added to the precepts of the Koran, such feelings could only be cherished by the lonely inhabitant of the desert, in the recesses of his bosom. He neither had the means to collect his own meditations into a regular code of doctrine, nor to preach them to other nations. But when these same opinions insensibly penetrated from the sterile plains of the Nedjid into the hilly and fertile district of Ared, what had remained a vague and insulated sentiment among thinly-scattered tribes, pitching their tents at random, amid a stationary population, crowded in towns and villages, became condensed into positive precepts, and a peculiar code, which enabled its adherents distinctly to mark their separation from the rest of the Mahometans. This happened towards the close of the seventeenth century. At that period, the district of Ayani was ruled by a sheik of the name of Soleiman, a descendant from the noble family of the Koreish, now reduced to a few obscure individuals, whence sprung the Prophet. This sheik derived a

considerable income from the numerous herds of camels which he let out to the Mahometans of India, who yearly disembarked at Katif, and traversed Ared on their way to Mecca. But, although loaded with riches, he long remained unblessed with progeny. In his old age, and when he no longer had any hopes of offspring, Heaven bestowed on him a son.

Every species of prodigy is said to have announced and accompanied the birth of this wonderful child. A great earthquake made every mosque that rests upon the ground shake to its foundations, and every minaret that shoots up in air, topple on its base; and while, during several successive nights, cities, villages, castles, and fields, shone with a supernatural and brilliant light, the lamps which burned in the sepulchral chapels of Mahomet and of the other saints were dimmed and went out preternaturally, in spite of imams and snuffers. The Wahabees affirm that these miracles are so well attested that no one can doubt them except determined and obstinate unbelievers. Abd-el-Wahab, or the "Slave of the Most High," was the name given to the infant for whom Heaven seemed to have reserved such lofty destinies.

In his youth he was sent to study law in the most celebrated seminaries of Damascus, where he learned from the orthodox Mahometans themselves to attack the corruptions introduced into their creed. He no sooner returned to his home than he began to preach the necessity of a thorough reformation, and took upon himself the character of a Mahometan Martin Luther. His doctrine has been sometimes represented as pure Deism; but nothing can be more erroneous. He main-

tained not only the divine origin of the Koran, but he might even be said to enhance the importance of the sacred text by asserting that it was able, alone, to supply all the spiritual wants of the faithful, without any adventitious aid, and by divesting of the smallest remnant of authority every article of faith, or rule of conduct, since added to the Book sent from heaven, either by the Prophet himself, or by any of the later doctors of Islamism. Wahab, indeed, although he regarded the Koran as received directly from the Most High, considered Mahomet, his organ, as only an ordinary mortal. The founder of Islamism, endowed, according to the doctrine of the new sectary, with no one superhuman attribute, no gift of miracles, no peculiar sanctity, but substantially resembling other men, could not give a stamp of holiness even to such oral precepts, distinct from the Koran, as he himself spontaneously uttered. If any worship addressed to Mahomet was reprehensible in the eyes of Abd-el-Wahab, still infinitely more so was the least character of sanctity attached to other individuals — imams, doctors, or expounders of the law. Pilgrimages performed to peculiar tombs, virtue attributed to peculiar relics, were treated as rank idolatry. He soon had proselytes; and the first pious performance which he enjoined upon them, when they became sufficiently strong in numbers, was the destruction of the chapels of Mecca and Medina. The dust of the pretended saints was, like that of the desert, to be scattered to the winds; and the treasures which adorned their monuments were to reward the piety of their despoilers.

About the middle of the last century, Abd-el-Wahab,

full of years, and renowned for sanctity, was gathered to his fathers. His son Mahomet, educated, like him, in the study of the law, succeeded him as a preacher of the new doctrine. Mahomet gave himself more wholly up to its internal light, being, from his childhood, struck with incurable blindness. This calamity prevented him from leading forth his proselytes in person, in the wars for the defence or propagation of the new creed; but its irrefragable truth had already found a champion of the most martial character in Ebn Saoud, the supreme ruler of Ared, who resided at Derayeh, and who became the temporal chief of the Wahabees, while Mahomet remained their spiritual leader. From the moment that the new doctrine, adopted by old established princes, was able to add the force of arms to that of arguments, it made rapid and extensive progress. Almost immediately on the promulgation of Wahabism, its more recent name had sanctioned the tenets already professed of old by the roving tribes of the desert; and soon after its establishment in the Ared, the stationary sheiks of the province of Kherdj enlisted under its banners. It soon rapidly approached the Hedjas, and the shereef of Mecca, the guardian of the holy place, began to tremble for his power and dominion. Loudly inveighing against the apathy with which other states saw the danger approach them, he determined to avert it from the realms which he ruled by promoting a powerful diversion.

To the east of the Nedjid extends the half-desert, half-cultivated province of Hadjar, the ancient domain of the mighty tribe of Beni-Haled. During one part of the year, its chief roves with his tents over the

boundless plains; in the other, he resides at El Hassa, the capital. This city once recognized the authority of the Turkish sultan, but was subsequently reclaimed by its Arab founders. Turkish fortifications, however, still surround its precincts, and Turkish families form a principal part of its population. The chief men of the place bore the Wahabees a peculiar hatred, and the shereef of Mecca found no difficulty in exciting them to hostility against the spreading heretics. They took up arms and marched against Derayeh. Internal anarchy and dissension had already begun to shake the new doctrine to its foundation. Nothing seems more probable than that Wahabism, like many older heresies, would have blazed for an instant in the district where it arose, and then have sunk forever into oblivion, had not the interference of strangers preserved it from the fate which it seemed destined to share. The danger which threatened the Wahabees from without, forced them to stifle their internal feuds. They united for common defence and safety. Saoud, before harassed by continual murmurings and mutinies, now found his followers full of obedience and zeal; and, after several years of warfare with the Hadjarites, the Wahabees found themselves gaining sensibly upon their antagonists.

As soon as Abd-el-Aziz, the son and successor of Ebn Saoud, felt himself secure on the side of Hadjar, he turned his views towards Mecca. Revenge as well as avarice animated him against its chief. But where all lived upon the holy things which he came to destroy, he found very few within the city disposed to second his attempts from without. It was only at the

close of the third campaign that he obtained sight of the fortress of Tayif, situated on a high mountain at a short distance from Mecca; and before he could lay siege to the place, the death of his spiritual partner, Mahomet, whose earthly career had extended to nearly a century, forced him, by the confusion which it caused among his sectaries, to return to Derayeh. The shereef of Mecca thought this the time for changing his defensive into an offensive war, and pursued the Wahabees into their own territory. There, however, rapidly facing about, these sectaries, with their strength now refreshed, so completely routed his harassed army that he was hardly able, in his flight, to reach the gates of his capital.

The fame of the Wahabees had, ere this, made its way to Constantinople. The Ottoman Porte awoke from its trance, and began to manifest symptoms of alarm at the progress of the new sectaries. The sultan directed the pacha of Bagdad to provide for the defence of the holy city: and the pacha transmitted the sultan's instructions to his vassals, the Arab sheiks of Montefih and Beni Haled. Both prepared immediately to obey; but the sheik of Montefih was murdered by a disguised Wahabee in his own tent; and the sheik of Beni Haled, after an unsuccessful campaign, saw El Hassa, his capital, sacked by the victorious enemy. Great consternation prevailed at Bagdad, for the Wahab doctrine had now extended its sway to every part of Arabia north of Yemen, and had gained the very core of the tribe of Montefih itself, hitherto considered as the chief bulwark of the Ottoman empire against the new sectaries. It is true that the Wahabees seemed

little more than an undisciplined multitude, armed only with matchlocks; but temporary defeat could not ensure a vast province, vulnerable in every point, an empire tottering to its base, with a militia enervated by sloth and luxury, against a race of men who seemed actually to possess bodies of steel and souls of fire; whose abode was the inaccessible heart of the desert; whose patience of fatigue, hardship, and privation, exceeded conception, as much as their rapidity of motion baffled calculation; who, while they heeded not heat, nor hunger, nor thirst, appeared when least expected, and, on the slightest reverse, always had the sands of the desert open to them as a shelter; whose obedience to their chiefs, in whatever concerned their new creed, knew no bounds, while their bravery in battle and their contempt of death were fed by a fanaticism far exceeding the worn-out zeal of the Turks; and who, in all their expeditions, were equally animated by the interests of religion and the hopes of plunder.

In 1797, Soliman, pacha of Bagdad, made a fruitless attempt to crush the Wahabees in the province of El Hassa; but his troops were obliged to retreat. The victorious Arabs overran the district of Basra, and took the holy town of Imam Husein, where they destroyed the famous temple, and robbed it of the immense treasures which had been deposited there by the pious generosity of the Turkish sultans, and the shahs of Persia. In 1801, Abd-el-Aziz, at the head of above 100,000 men, marched against Mecca. After an obstinate siege, that city was taken early in 1803, and the Wahabees plundered the rich tombs of the Mahometan saints, and in their zeal, did not even spare the famous mosque:

this they stripped of the immense treasures and costly furniture to which each Mahometan prince of Europe, Asia, and Africa, had contributed his share. The capture of Mecca was followed by that of Medina, in 1804, and Mahomet's tomb was robbed and destroyed.

Nothing could exceed the consternation and horror which spread throughout the East, when it became known that the Holy City was in the hands of the heretics, and the tomb of the Prophet despoiled The Catholic world could not feel more scandalized should an army of Protestants take Rome by storm, expel the pope, and place a married priest on the throne of St. Peter. The pilgrimages were stopped, and from 1803 to 1807 no great caravan ventured to cross Arabia. From the shores of the Atlantic to the banks of the Ganges and the frontiers of China, every pious Mussulman was absorbed in grief at the thought that, henceforth, he would be prevented from performing his most sacred duty. The very existence of Turkey being now menaced by the enemy, who overran Syria, and concluded an alliance with the rebellious pacha of Bagdad, the Porte at last found a man capable of making head against these formidable enemies. This person was Mehemet Ali, the present pacha of Egypt. In 1809, he built a flotilla on the Red Sea, and despatched an expedition against the enemy, under the command of his second son, a youth of eighteen years of age, assisted by Ahmed Agha, surnamed Napoleon Bonaparte. This army captured Medina in 1812, and Mecca in the following year. A peace was agreed upon in 1815; but the next year, Ibrahim Pacha, Mehemet's eldest son, invaded Arabia, and in-

vested the Wahabee chief in Derayeh; after a long siege, the place surrendered in 1818. The chief, with several of his family, was sent to Constantinople, where, after being promenaded through the streets for three days, they were beheaded, and their bodies exposed to the outrages of the mob. The power of the Wahabees was broken, but they were not exterminated; and there have been symptoms of rebellion in different quarters of Arabia at various times since that period.*

* The early history of the Wahabees is very obscure. We have relied chiefly upon the work of Mr. Hope, who, from a long residence in the East, had the best sources of knowledge within his reach. His pages have furnished us with the substance of the preceding sketch.

SIBERIA.

UNDER this general name are comprised those extensive regions which constitute the Asiatic portion of the Russian empire. The whole territory extends, from east to west, upwards of three thousand six hundred miles, and nearly two thousand miles from north to south. On the north it is washed by the Polar Sea, and on the east by the Pacific. The Ural Mountains divide it from European Russia on the west; the boundaries which separate it from the Chinese empire on the south are not clearly defined in many places. Siberia was almost entirely unknown to the Greeks and Romans, who extended their imaginary Scythian Ocean over a great part of this territory. Ptolemy, with better information, describes it as a vast, unknown region, north-east of the Caspian Sea; but the utmost extent of ancient geography scarcely reached the Ural Mountains. During the middle ages, Marco Polo, and other travellers, heard the Tartars speak vaguely of a country which was rich in furs, but covered with perpetual darkness. In 1242, the Tartars founded a kingdom on the banks of the Irtisch and the Obi, the conquest of which by the Cossacks was followed by a series of discoveries, which extended the Russian power and the geographical knowledge of Europe to the eastern extremity of Asia.

This vast region, which is much larger than the whole of Europe, is marked with a singular character of sterility and desolation. The rivers are among the most considerable in Asia; but they flow across desert plains, from which an eternal winter banishes human arts and social life. Their waters nowhere reflect the images of great cities; their banks nowhere receive merchant fleets laden with the productions of foreign climes. All the variety of scenery offered to the eye of the traveller in Siberia comprises only vast sheets of water, sometimes bordered by a forest, and sometimes by a dismal morass; bones of mammoths brought to view by the floods; fishing canoes and countless flocks of aquatic birds; and the peaceful beaver, raising his curious dwelling without dreading the pursuit of man. The mountains of Siberia are its boundaries, for the whole interior forms little more than one vast dead and dreary level. If the rivers flowed westward into Russia, and reached any of the seas of the civilized world, they might have borne rich cargoes on their bosoms, and given an impulse to the industry of this barbarous region. But they all flow parallel to each other, from south to north, rising in the Altai and its connected chains, rolling their sluggish waves through frozen plains, and ending in a sea bound in chains of perpetual ice, along which the utmost efforts of modern navigators have in vain attempted to find a passage.

The country contains several lakes, the largest of which is the Baikal, whose dimensions almost entitle it to the appellation of an inland sea. It is upward of three hundred miles long and fifty broad, and presents a

grand and imposing aspect, being encircled by high mountains, which on the northern side are rugged, and crowned with woods. The Russians who navigate it speak of the lake with a respectful awe, giving it the name of the Holy Sea; even the surrounding mountains are held sacred. The waters are fresh, and the lake is completely frozen over in winter. It is subject to extraordinary agitations, being sometimes raised into high waves by a moderate wind, and at other times scarcely put in motion by a violent storm. This fact, viewed with superstitious wonder by the inhabitants, no doubt depends on the direction and duration of the winds, whether they blow over it longitudinally or transversely, and whether they come from a quarter in which the mountains offer much or little obstruction. It is said, also, to be liable to a species of intestine commotion or boiling, by means of which, vessels receive rude shocks, even when the surface is perfectly smooth.

Salt lakes abound in Siberia, in the sandy steppes of the south, and in the cold, mountainous regions and frozen morasses of the north. It is a remarkable fact that fresh-water lakes often change their qualities, and become salt. The Lake of Seidiaishevo was once filled with fresh water, and was very shallow and full of fish. All at once, its depth increased; its waters became brackish; the fish died, and one half of a neighboring forest was swallowed up in it. Soda lakes are found in various parts. The "Rumbling Lake" is situated near a branch of the River Abakan. Dreadful noises are heard in it, announcing some revolution in the bosom of the earth, such as that which once burst the barriers of the Lake of Goosinoi.

Siberia is very rich in metals. There are three extensive mining districts, one of which comprehends the Ural Mountains. These mines yield a great quantity of iron, gold, copper, silver, platina, lead, and zinc. Several kinds of precious stones are also found. The amethysts, topazes, emeralds, and red tourmalines, are of great beauty. The tusks of the fossil elephant constitute an article of commerce, and many of the inhabitants make the discovery of them the business of their lives. These fossil bones, mixed with those of many other animals, such as the rhinoceros, are found mostly in the northern districts. They are deposited in immense masses, generally in hills of clay, rarely in mould, and never in sand. The harder the clay is, the better the bones are preserved. Those who search for them, follow the banks of the rivers, after the inundations of spring have subsided. The rapid course of the rivers, during the floods, undermines part of the high banks, and thus the bones which are imbedded in them are brought to light.

Among the natural curiosities of the country may be mentioned a mass of native iron, weighing 1680 pounds, discovered in 1749, near Abakansk, and which, according to a tradition of the Tartars, had fallen from the sky. The asbestos of the Ural also deserves mention; many articles have been woven from this material; and some years ago, a schoolmaster offered to manufacture from it paper sufficient to supply all the offices of the Russian national records. A singular substance called lithomrge, or "rock marrow," is found on the eastern coasts, which is eaten by the Tungooses. Near the Ural Mountains powdered

gypsum, commonly called "rock meal," is sometimes mixed with bread; but its effects are pernicious. Throughout the whole country there is found, on the aluminous schistus, an efflorescence called "rock butter," which is employed by the people as a remedy for some diseases.

The climate of Siberia is most inhospitable. The warmest districts are colder than Norway. The winter is nine or ten months long throughout almost the whole country. Snow begins to fall in September, and it is not rare in May: the corn crops, when not ripe in August, are considered as lost; they are often covered with snow before they can be harvested. The summer heats are short, but they are powerful and sudden. In the neighborhood of Yakutsk, the Tungooses often go naked in summer. The growth of corn and other vegetables is almost visible to the eye. But in the neighborhood of the Frozen Ocean it is in vain that the solar rays continue, night and day, to influence a soil condemned to eternal frost. In the middle of the long day of the polar circle, a north wind is sufficient to cover the waters with a thin crust of ice, and to give a yellow and red tinge to the leaves of plants. The vegetation is often limited to a few days, and in that short interval the plants flower and form seed. We have strong evidence of the singular fact that Siberia must, in former times, have enjoyed a much warmer climate than at present. Mention has already been made of the bones of elephants and rhinoceroses in this country. The remains of these quadrupeds are found mixed with sea-shells and other bones which appear to be skulls of the largest inhabitants of the

ocean. The body of the mammoth has been found quite entire, with the skin and hair in a good state of preservation. These astonishing remains of an animal population foreign to the present climate of Siberia have given rise to various conjectures. It is unnecessary to refute the learned Boyer, who wished to consider them as belonging to elephants, which accompanied the Mongolian and Tartar armies. The immense number of the bones found is adverse to such a theory, which, moreover, does not explain the circumstance of the admixture of the remains of marine animals. They present no marks of having been dragged or floated from a distance by the waters of a deluge. These circumstances concur in causing us to think them the remains of animals which lived in the very places where they are now found. But how could they have subsisted in a country so barren and cold? For the solution of this problem no reasonable hypothesis can be framed, unless we suppose that Siberia was formerly much more temperate and fertile than at the present day. By what means the change has been effected, can be only a matter of conjecture.

In a climate so rigorous, none but the most hardy trees and plants can thrive: the forests are composed chiefly of birches and firs. The reindeer is perhaps the greatest blessing which nature has bestowed on the unfortunate nomade of the arctic regions. He yokes these animals in his sledge, drinks their milk, lives on their flesh, and clothes himself with their skins. Reindeer are not expensive to support, the moss which they find under the snow being almost

their only food. They can dispense with a shelter in a climate where other animals of the most robust constitution cannot live at all. A Samoiede who has one hundred or one hundred and fifty reindeer, is reckoned a rich man. An economical Tungoose keeps a thousand, a Koriak several thousands, and we are told that among the Tchooktchis there are individuals who own as many as fifty thousand.

When the Russians first entered Siberia, they found the country in the possession of numerous tribes, more or less addicted to a nomadic life: none of them cultivated the ground, and they had no permanent places of abode, with the exception of some Tartars in the neighborhood of Tobolsk. Some of these tribes belonged to widely-spread nations; but others, often consisting of a small number of families, constituted separate nations. The Yakutes, on the Kolyma River, preserve a tradition that the country on both sides of that river was once inhabited by a nation called Omoki, which left that country, and emigrated to the west; but there seem to have been no traces of this tribe when the Russians took possession of Siberia. Though it is certain that several tribes or nations have disappeared, there are still about thirty tribes, differing more or less in physical character and in language. Some of them belong to the Caucasian race, and others are akin to the Mongols.

A part of Siberia was conquered by Zingis Khan and his successors, but the whole country remained totally unknown to Europeans till the close of the sixteenth century. About that time, a Cossack of the Don, named Yarmak Timotheovitz, being forced by

some accident to leave his native country, and having no other means of subsistence, collected a band of associates, and began robbing on the highway. He soon became famous and powerful; and, as he robbed only the rich, and liberally bestowed his plunder upon the poor, he acquired a popularity far above that of a common brigand. He never killed, or even hurt, any one, except in self-defence. This behavior so raised his reputation, that all the idle fellows in the country enlisted under him, proud to follow so brave and enterprising a leader. He became so troublesome that the governors of the southern provinces of Russia sent out troops to seize him. Yarmak, hearing of this design in season, procured a fleet of boats on the Volga, and changed his mode of life from highway robbery to piracy on that river. Being attacked here, he made his escape down the river, crossed the Caspian Sea, and took shelter on the Persian shore, where he passed some time in the disguise of a merchant.

The Persians at length, discovering his true character, expelled him from the territory, and his only course was to return to the Volga, where he lurked among the woods and villages, observing great caution, and paying the inhabitants liberally for every thing he needed. Being well aware that so numerous a band of marauders could not long escape discovery, he left the Volga, and steered up the River Kama, which was, at that time, little frequented by the Russians or any other nation, and where he hoped to find a safe retreat during the winter. He had, at this time, a body of two hundred men with him. Near a large village, they were stopped by the ice, and the inhabitants were

greatly alarmed at the sight of so large a force, yet, being unable to resist them, gave them a hospitable reception. Yarmak demanded only provisions and winter-quarters for his men, and promised to leave the place unmolested the ensuing spring. In consequence of this declaration, they were allowed to pass the winter quietly in this remote spot. On the approach of summer, dreading a discovery by the Russian government, they made preparations for their departure, but were unable for some time to decide upon the route to be pursued. At last they resolved to cross the mountains of Verchaturia, and penetrate into the unknown territory to the eastward, where they hoped to find some inhabited district, or at least a safe asylum from the pursuit of the Russians.

They accordingly crossed the mountains, and reached the banks of a river now called the Tur. Finding this stream navigable, they constructed a fleet of canoes, and embarked upon it. The country along the banks was uninhabited; but after rowing for some days down the stream, they discovered several villages of Mahometan Tartars, who were astonished at the sight of so numerous a body of men belonging to a nation of which they had never before heard. Yarmak staid some days here, and informed himself respecting the country, its inhabitants, and government. He then pursued his voyage to the River Tobol, where he found populous towns and a well-cultivated country. His approach alarmed the Tartar king, who assembled a numerous body of horse and foot, armed with bows, arrows, and lances. Hostilities took place, and many battles were fought, in which the Cossacks, although

vastly inferior in numbers, defeated great multitudes of their enemies by means of their fire-arms, which had never before been known among these people. The Tartars were as much amazed and terrified at the appearance of the Cossacks as the Mexicans were at the sight of the Spaniards.

Notwithstanding these victories, Yarmak, finding the Tartar forces increasing as he approached the capital, and having also lost many men, and expended much of his ammunition, felt his situation to be very critical. A long and severe winter was approaching, and it was necessary to look out for safe quarters during that season. This country afforded him no secure residence, and his only course was to retreat. He directed his march westward up the Tobol and Tur Rivers. The furious Tartars annoyed their retreating enemies by perpetual clouds of arrows from the banks, killing great numbers, so that but few of the Cossacks escaped with their leader. At length, the survivors placed themselves beyond reach of their enemies, and arrived at the village where they had wintered the preceding year. The inhabitants might now have driven them off; but, on seeing the rich furs, and other spoils which they had obtained during their expedition, they gave them a welcome reception. Yarmak did not forget to dispense his favors liberally among those who had entertained him in his distress, when he fled from justice.

This adventurer had now time to ponder upon his desperate and wretched condition. He knew that the fact of his lurking in these parts could not long be concealed from the Russian authorities, and that a force

would be despatched in pursuit of him, which he would be totally unable either to resist or escape from. To make another attempt against the Tartars with a handful of men would be certain ruin. In this emergency, it occurred to him to make his discovery of this new people instrumental in procuring his pardon from the Russian government. He accordingly found means to despatch a petition to Moscow, offering to throw himself on the clemency of the czar, on condition of a pardon being granted to himself and his associates, in return for which he offered to point out the way to the easy conquest of a rich country, which he had discovered in the east. This proposal was too important to be neglected. Yarmak was granted a safe-conduct to Moscow, where he laid his whole scheme before the court, and offered to lead an army upon the expedition. The whole was agreed upon, and orders were immediately issued for assembling the troops. They rendezvoused at Solikamsky, where they passed the winter in preparing for the invasion the following spring. During this interval, Yarmak distinguished himself by his activity and skill, and exhibited talents of no common order. He collected such of his former associates as could be found, and organized them into a company in whom he could confide on all occasions.

In June, 1579, the army, three thousand strong, began its march for Siberia. When they reached the inhabited part of the country, they met with many straggling parties of the Tartars in arms, and fleets of armed boats on the rivers, ready to oppose them. Many actions took place, in which the Tartars were generally defeated. The war was protracted through

several years, and in 1584 Yarmak found his army reduced to three hundred men. One rainy night, he encamped upon an island in the River Irtisch, where imagining himself in perfect security, he took no precautions against a surprise. The soldiers, overcome with fatigue, abandoned themselves to slumber, and at the dead of night, the Tartars, who had discovered their place of retreat by means of their scouts, burst upon them on a sudden, and massacred nearly every man. Yarmak, in attempting to leap into a boat, fell into the river, and was drowned by the weight of a suit of armor which had been presented to him by the czar of Russia.

Although this expedition miscarried, yet the power of the Tartar sovereign was broken, and in subsequent campaigns, the Russians gradually gained on him, until his empire was entirely overthrown, and all the country west of the River Obi was subjected to the sway of the czar. The royal family were sent to Russia, where estates were granted them, and their posterity continued to enjoy the title of Princes of Siberia — a more generous treatment than was experienced by the mighty monarchs of Peru and Mexico. The immense territory of Siberia required a long time for its complete subjugation, and it was not till after the lapse of seventy or eighty years that the Russian arms had advanced from the Ural Mountains to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

The Russians, Cossacks, and other colonists from Europe, inhabit chiefly the towns and military stations of Siberia. Some of them are descended from the soldiers employed in the conquest of the country;

others are criminals sent thither in banishment. To these two classes are to be added adventurers, deserters among the peasantry, and ruined merchants, who have sought here the means of retrieving their fortunes. These different classes of colonists, burying themselves in a vast desert, have joined to their original grossness that which is generated by a savage climate. But if indolence, ignorance, and intemperance, often encroach on their happiness, we find them praised by travellers for their generous hospitality, their frank gayety, and the good order which prevails among them. A century ago, the Siberians were esteemed so savage a race that Peter the Great thought he could not inflict a severer punishment on his mortal enemies, the Swedes, than to send the prisoners of that nation to Siberia. The consequence was, that these honorable exiles introduced into that country the customs and the manufactures of Europe. While employed in improving their own condition, they civilized the people among whom they came.

Whatever refinement of manners exists in the large towns of Siberia does not extend to the small towns and villages which are thinly scattered in the midst of vast forests. Some farmers, rich in flocks, scarcely know the use of money, and lead a life altogether patriarchal. The hunters, ranging the deserts, are transformed into a species of savages. The frozen ground serves them for a bed: they quench their thirst with the berries of the thicket, or the blood of the animals which they have shot. The Cossack, who at Tobolsk or Irkutsk finds himself confounded with the populace of those cities, becomes a sort of mon-

arch when sent among the Samoiedes or the Yookashghirs to collect the taxes and to maintain order. He has a cottage for his palace, and a corporal's staff for a sceptre: the delicacies of his table consist of salmon, the flesh of reindeer, and bear's head. The merchants of Siberia are chiefly itinerant, going from town to town and from market to market. The number of Europeans established in this country, and of Siberiaks, or descendants of Europeans, amounts to about half a million. The numerous Tartar tribes comprise a population of about a hundred thousand. A third part of the country is inhabited, or rather wandered over, by the Tungooses, an indigenous race, who subsist by hunting, and whose religion is paganism. The Samoiedes, another savage and pagan tribe, occupy a district more than two thousand miles in extent, covered with heath and morass: they are a dwarfish race, from four to five feet in height. The Kamtchatkans are diminishing in numbers so rapidly, that, in a short time, the whole tribe will probably be extinct.

The first thought which occurs to us on the mention of Siberia, is that of the exiles who are banished to that dreary country by the Russian government, sometimes to the number of ten thousand in a year. The punishment imposed upon them varies according to the offence. The fate of those condemned to the highest degree of punishment is one approaching as near to perfect misery as the human faculties can sustain. Nothing can be more wretched than their condition. From the first hour after their arrival, they are engaged in the most laborious and unwholesome

toil, in the freezing depths of the mines, or amid the suffocating vapors of the places where an unhealthy chemical process is going on, — shut up from the light of day, the breath of heaven, and the sympathy of their kind. They not only lose property and rank, but, by a refinement in cruelty, they lose their very names. Christian and family appellations are alike obliterated, and the poor exiles are numbered, to distinguish them, and by his number each one is called, when it is necessary to address him. The number of those who suffer this extremity of punishment is, however, very limited. The greater part of the Siberian exiles are by no means severely treated, being rather colonists than convicts; but from the moment when they arrive in the country, all connection between them and the community to which they previously belonged entirely ceases, and their past life becomes as perfect a blank as if they were transported to another planet.

FARTHER INDIA, &c.

UNDER this name we shall include the Birman empire, Cochin China, Tonquin, Cambodia, Laos, and Siam. We exclude the peninsula of Malacca, from the circumstance of its being inhabited by a race of men essentially distinct from the others. Farther India is sometimes called Chin-India, or Indo-China, part of it having once been subject to the Chinese government, and most of the races which inhabit it resembling the Chinese more or less in figure, physiognomy, and complexion, as well as in manners, religion, and language. This vast country, which extends from the Bay of Bengal to the Chinese Sea, is little known, except along its shores. The interior appears to contain three or four mountain chains, proceeding from the elevated region of Thibet, and running southward parallel to each other. Between these ranges of mountains are situated three long and magnificent valleys, besides several of a subordinate rank. These valleys are watered by four great rivers, the Irrawady, the Salwen, the Meinam, and the Cambodia.

As the southern part of this country extends to within ten degrees of the equator, its climate must be among the warmest of any on the globe; but the observations made by travellers in the interior have all

been hasty and imperfect. Many parts are undoubtedly temperate, such as the northern portions of the Birman empire. The coasts are liable to intense heats; yet these are moderated by the sea breezes, which are cooler and damper than those of Hindostan. The periodical inundation of the low valleys by the rising of the rivers is a circumstance common to all this region. The joint operation of the great heat and humidity imparts to the vegetation a character of the most luxuriant magnificence. The contrasts of barrenness and fertility are here marked in the most striking manner. A burning sun reduces to powder, or a crust as hard as rock, those soils, where the rain does not fall in the requisite abundance, or remain a sufficient time. But along the margins of the rivers, and on the sides of the mountains, an eternal verdure, and an aspect of peculiar grandeur, from towering tops and extended foliage, characterize the mighty trees of these climates. These giants of the vegetable creation are surrounded by shrubs and herbs, which exhibit, in their flowers and fruits, forms the most singular and diversified, and colors the most vivid, while they dispense the most fragrant odors. The most remarkable animals of this region are the Indian elephant, the rhinoceros, the tiger, the leopard, the bear, and the orang-outang. The nations who inhabit this territory resemble the Mongolian and Chinese races in their figure, their square countenances, their yellow complexion, strong hair, and small, oblique eyes; hence we may safely consider them as of the same original stock. All the original tongues of these nations exhibit the same characteristic simplicity and poverty with the monosyllabic

languages of Thibet and China. Buddhism, derived from Hindostan, is the religion of the whole country.

The most important state is Birmah, which lies nearest to Hindostan. It is above a thousand geographical miles in length, and six hundred in breadth. In fertility, beauty, and grandeur of scenery, and in the variety, value, and elegance, of its natural productions, it is equalled by few countries on earth. The estimates of its population are surprisingly discrepant, some carrying it as high as thirty millions, and others reducing it to less than four. Mr. Malcom, of Boston, who made the most careful inquiries, computes it at six millions. The Birmans may claim the appellation of a civilized race. They have a regular government, a written language, an established literature, foreign commerce, respectable architecture, good roads and bridges, manufactures, gradations of rank, and a respect for the female sex unknown to many nations of the East. The sovereign is completely despotic. When any thing belonging to him is mentioned, the epithet "golden" is attached to it. A person admitted to his presence has "been at the golden feet." When he is said to have heard any thing, it has "reached the golden ears." The perfume of roses is described as "grateful to the golden nose." He is the sole proprietor of all the elephants in his dominions. A singularly absurd custom takes place, in this country, in certain forms of political homage shown to a white elephant, an extraordinary animal kept for the purpose, superbly lodged near the royal palace, sumptuously dressed and fed, provided with functionaries like a second sovereign, held next in rank to the king, and superior to the

queen, and made to receive presents and other tokens of respect from foreign ambassadors. The court of Birmah is fully as proud as that of China. The sovereign acknowledges no equal.

Ava, the capital, contains about a hundred thousand inhabitants. Its multitude of gilded spires gives it a magnificent appearance from a distance. The Birmans excel in gilding, and the quantity of gold with which they ornament their temples is enormous. A knowledge of letters is very generally diffused. The people are fond of poetry and music; they possess epic and religious poems of great celebrity, and recite in verse the exploits of their heroes. Travellers are astonished at the number of books contained in the royal library, where the contents of each chest are written on the outside in letters of gold. The Birmans are very indulgent to the manners and customs of strangers.

When this country was first visited by the Portuguese, it was subject to Pegu. But about the middle of the sixteenth century, the Birmese rebelled, and not only established their own independence, but subdued their former masters. This supremacy continued till about the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Peguans, having obtained arms and officers from the Dutch and Portuguese, turned them against the Birmese, gained successive victories, and finally reduced the capital, and made their king prisoner. The Birmese were compelled to submit to their old masters; but a reaction soon arose among this brave and energetic people. Alompra, a man of humble birth, collected a band of his countrymen, and carried on for

some time a desultory warfare. His forces gradually increasing, he suddenly attacked and took Ava, and succeeded in raising a general insurrection against the king of Pegu. A powerful army, sent by that prince to quell the insurrection, was totally defeated; and Alompra, following up his success, invaded Pegu, and gained a series of victories, which made him master of the capital, and extinguished the Pegu dynasty. The successors of Alompra added to the dominions of the empire, and Birmah became extremely powerful.

As the British territories bordered upon this empire, the Birmese soon found themselves involved in quarrels with their neighbors. Matters at length came to an open rupture, and the British eagerly seized the tempting occasion to push their conquests still farther. In 1824 they invaded Birmah with all the military force they could assemble. The court of Ava, long accustomed to vanquish and domineer over all its neighbors, could not be induced to view this movement with any serious apprehension. Their vain confidence enabled the invaders to defeat one Birmese army after another, and to advance rapidly toward the capital. Seeing no chance of preserving the seat of government, the king at length signed an humiliating treaty, paying a large sum for the expense of the war, and ceding to the British the important provinces of Arracan, Mergui, and Tenasserim.

As an illustration of the way in which a vain-glorious people write their own history, the reader will be amused to see the manner in which the above events are related in the Birmese annals. Mr. Crawford, who visited Ava the following year, says, "I

learnt, last night, from good authority, that the court historiographer had recorded in the National Chronicle his account of the war with the English. It was to the following purport: 'In the year 1187 and 88, the Kula pyu, or white strangers of the west, fastened a quarrel upon the Lord of the Golden Palace. They landed at Rangoon, took that place and Prome, and were permitted to advance as far as Yandabo; for the king, from motives of piety and humanity, made no effort whatever to oppose them. The strangers had spent vast sums of money in their enterprise, and by the time they had reached Yandabo, their resources were exhausted, and they were in great distress. They petitioned the king, who, in his clemency and generosity, sent them large sums of money to pay their expenses back, and ordered them out of the country!'"

The limits of Cochin China are by no means accurately defined. It formed, in ancient times, one state with Tonquin; but a rebellious governor afterwards erected here an independent kingdom. The government is despotic, and the sovereign is styled the "king of heaven." His army is from one hundred thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand strong, among whom are thirty thousand armed with muskets, and trained to the European exercise. The soldiers carry sabres and pikes of enormous length. The Cochin Chinese are among the most active and lively people of Asia. They are small in stature, and of a dark olive complexion. The common people are Buddhists, but the mandarins are disciples of Confucius. The language is a dialect of the Chinese, and the written character

is the same. People of condition dress in silk, and in their manners they display all the politeness of the Chinese. The costume of both sexes consists of flowing robes with wide sleeves, under which are vests and trousers of cotton. Their houses are built of bamboo, and thatched with reeds and rice straw: they are generally surrounded with groves of orange and lemon-trees, bananas, and cocoas. The people are tolerably skilful in the manufacture of hard ware, and their pottery and stone wares are handsome. They build very elegant ships, some of them of sixty tons' burden. The ceremonies and festivals of this people proclaim their Chinese origin. When the king dies, they bury him in profound silence, for fear of conveying the important intelligence to the hostile genii, who might seize on such a moment to afflict the nation with new calamities.

MALACCA, &c.

The Malay race, who give their name to the peninsula of Malaya, or Malacca, or derive it from thence, are one of the five grand divisions of the human species. They are, perhaps, the indigenous inhabitants of that peninsula, and are likewise scattered over the Sunda, Philippine, Molucca, and Marian Islands, as well as other islands of the Pacific Ocean, including New Zealand and a part of New Holland. The characteristics of this race are a tawny color, black, soft, thick, curly hair, the nose thick, wide, and flat, the mouth large, the upper jaw a little projecting. Almost all the languages spoken in the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and in the Pacific, contain a great number of words and expressions which are evidently derived from the Malay tongue.

The Malays have made considerable progress in civilization, but more in the Island of Java than in the other islands of the Indian Archipelago. They are well acquainted with agriculture and some of the mechanical arts. They have also made some progress in medicine and music. They are undoubtedly more civilized than any of the nations of Southern Asia which inhabit the countries between China and Hindostan. The Malays have great mental activity, and

eagerly apply themselves to trade and navigation. Being expert navigators in the Indian Seas, and being favored by the great number of small, uninhabited islands, their daring spirit urges them to piracy. Various parts of these waters are thus rendered very dangerous for small vessels; but the Malay pirates rarely attack European ships. Most of the Malay tribes in the Indian islands are Mahometans, but their manners differ considerably from those of the Arabs. They are of a very revengeful temper, and from this cause arose among them the extraordinary practice called "running a muck."

The peninsula of MALACCA is seven hundred and fifty miles in length, and from eighty to one hundred and ten in breadth. It has been little explored by Europeans, and the interior appears to be entirely occupied by vast natural forests. In 1644, the Dutch attempted to penetrate into the country. The level districts were found covered with underwood, where it was necessary to open a road with the axe; and sometimes their progress was obstructed by marshes, which the natives alone were enabled to pass by means of felled trees. On ascending an eminence, the eye is delighted with the beauty of the foliage; but among the trees, brambles, thorns, and creeping plants, are so closely interwoven as to present an almost insurmountable obstacle to the progress of the traveller. In these forests mosquitoes fly in swarms like thick clouds. At every step there is danger of treading on a poisonous serpent. Leopards, tigers, and rhinoceroses, when disturbed in their native haunts, are ready to devour any traveller who is not provided with a strong escort, and

who does not keep up a fire during the whole night. Nor is an escort easily commanded. The Malays, a hundred times more dangerous than the tigers and the serpents, never attend a European but with great reluctance, and often betray the persons whom they are employed to conduct.

The population is thought to be not above a million. Many wide districts are without inhabitants. The country is divided into several kingdoms. No maps, ancient or modern, describe the interior as containing any towns or villages, and a great part of the people have no fixed habitations. The town of Malacca, situated on the western coast, was built in 1252, and was captured by the Portuguese in 1511, at which time it was a flourishing commercial mart. It afterwards fell into the hands of the Dutch, and subsequently changed hands several times between that nation and the English, who hold it at present, together with a tract of country containing about a thousand square miles. The population of the colony amounts to about thirty thousand. They export pepper, tin, and gold.

Sumatra is the most western of the Sunda Islands. The equator traverses this island nearly in the middle. It is nine hundred miles in length, and from one hundred and fifty to two hundred in breadth. Three fourths of its surface are covered with an impenetrable forest; and a chain of mountains extends throughout its whole length. The western coast, which is covered with extensive marshes, is the most pestilential region in the world; no places exceed in unhealthiness Bencoolen and Pooloo Bay. The most abundant commodity produced for exportation, and the chief object

of the European establishment, is pepper, the produce of a creeping plant. It begins to be productive in the third year, and continues so till the twentieth: there are two pepper harvests, one in September, and another in March. The camphor-tree grows spontaneously in the northern part of the island.

Marco Polo is the first European who is known to have visited Sumatra. The Portuguese arrived here first in 1509. The kingdom of Acheen was then governed by a powerful sovereign, who defeated all their attempts to gain a footing in the island. In 1575, a fleet of Acheenese destroyed all the shipping of the Portuguese on the coast. The Dutch and English formed settlements in the island during the seventeenth century; but after many wars, the Dutch obtained all the British settlements by treaty in 1824.

Java is the most important of the Sunda Islands. It is six hundred and sixty miles in length, and from sixty to one hundred and thirty in breadth, comprising a territory about the size of England. It is the seat of a great and flourishing native empire, and the centre of the power of a commercial company which once ruled all the eastern sea. Its northern shore is considered as extremely unhealthy, but on the hills and mountains of the interior the air is salubrious. The rice crops in this island are of the greatest importance. The cultivation of this article, and, indeed, all the branches of husbandry, are conducted with more intelligence and thrift by the Javanese than by the Hindoos. Next to rice, the most important production is maize. The articles exported comprise coffee, sugar, rice, pepper, cotton, sandal-wood, ginger, indigo, and edible

birds' nests, the production of a species of swallow which abound in Java. This nest has the appearance of a mass of fibrous, ill-concocted isinglass; it is always built in the caves of the rocks, at a distance from any human dwelling. The Chinese are the only consumers of this article of luxury, which is sold to them at the rate of twenty-eight dollars a pound. The quantity yearly produced in all the East India islands is valued at about a million and a half of dollars.

The Portuguese first visited Java in 1511, and soon after began to form settlements. The Dutch established themselves at Bantam in 1595, and the English erected a factory at the same place in 1602. This was the first possession of the English in the East Indies. The Dutch, however, expelled both them and the Portuguese; built Batavia, and established themselves firmly in the island. When Holland was united to the empire of Napoleon, the British took possession of all the Dutch settlements here; but they were restored in 1816.

The greater part of the island is in the possession of the Dutch; the remainder is under the government of the native princes, one of whom is not unknown in other parts of the world, — the king of Bantam. The famous Bohon Upas, or poison-tree of Java, of which so many marvels have been told and believed, is a lofty forest-tree, from the bark of which a poison is extracted in the form of a milk-white sap. But the exhalations of the tree are not poisonous; nor is it, as was formerly supposed, hurtful to the vegetation around it, as creepers and parasitical plants are found winding in abundance about its trunk and branches.

Borneo is the largest island in the world, unless New Holland be allowed the name of an island. It is eight hundred and fifty miles in length, and six hundred and eighty in breadth, comprising an area of two hundred and eighty-five thousand square miles. Its central parts have never been explored by Europeans, on account of the insalubrity of the climate. The Dutch have had a settlement on the western coast for above fifty years; yet Borneo is less known to us than any other of the large islands in these seas, except New Guinea. It is probable that the centre of the island, where the springs take their rise, is a marshy table-land, inundated during the rainy season, as an old tradition mentions the existence of a lake in the interior, from which all the rivers issue. There is a chain of mountains near the eastern coast, and the island is often devastated by volcanoes and earthquakes. The coast, for a distance of twenty and even fifty miles inland, presents nothing but marshy soil, part of which is a moving bog or inundated land. Gold is found in great plenty here, as well as diamonds, which are afforded by no other country except Hindostan and Brazil. One of the petty princes has a diamond in his possession valued at one million three hundred thousand dollars. The orang-outangs of this island bear a closer resemblance to the human species than those of any other part of the world; the natives affirm that this animal lights fires and cooks his fish and rice. Bees are so numerous here that their wax forms a large article of export.

The first attempts of the Europeans to open an intercourse with this island were unsuccessful, all the adventurers being quickly massacred or expelled. The

Dutch were the earliest nation that carried on any profitable commerce here. The English, in 1773, formed a settlement on the northern coast; but it was shortly after destroyed by the natives. The attempt was repeated in 1803, with no better success. A few years since, a joint-stock company was formed in London for working gold mines in Borneo; but of the result of this scheme we are ignorant.

CEYLON.

At the southern extremity of Hindostan lies the Island of Ceylon, separated from the continent only by a broad strait. It is two hundred and seventy-five miles in length, with an average breadth of one hundred miles, being about two thirds the size of Ireland. The sea-coast is low and flat, and encircled with a broad border of cocoa-nut trees surrounded by rocks and shoals. The interior is filled with mountains, which are seen, from the ocean, rising in successive ranges, many of them verdant and beautiful, others huge, rocky, and peaked. Adam's Peak, one of these eminences, though not the loftiest in the island, as was formerly believed, is accounted holy by the natives. In a solid granite rock, at the summit of this mountain, is the "sacred footstep," an impression somewhat resembling the print of a human foot, between five and six feet in length, believed to be the foot of Adam by the Mahometans, and of Siva by the Buddhists.

Although Ceylon is situated between the sixth and tenth parallels of north latitude, it enjoys a comparatively temperate climate. The sea breezes range quite across the island, and the lofty elevation of the mountains not only causes a certain degree of coolness, but attracts the clouds and moisture to such an extent as

to insure a perpetual verdure to the forests, and an unceasing cultivation to the fields over one half the country. Although there are no natural lakes in the island, hardly any region is better watered by streams than the hilly country in the interior and the adjacent territory; while the ingenuity and labor of the earlier inhabitants, in constructing immense reservoirs or tanks, had almost rendered them independent of such droughts as usually occur in these latitudes.

Ceylon contains numerous useful minerals and valuable gems. Iron is abundant. The most remarkable vegetable production is cinnamon, of which this island may be said to enjoy a monopoly, and which constitutes its chief wealth. The cinnamon-tree flourishes only in one small district in the south-west, where the nature of the soil, and the warmth, moisture, and steadiness, of the climate, contribute to cherish it. The largest plantation is near Columbo, and is about twelve miles in circuit. The cocoa-nut is also a valuable production; besides the rich fruit of this tree, its leaves are universally employed for the walls and roofs of houses. The sago-tree is also cultivated. Grain receives but little attention, with the exception of rice, of which there are four varieties. Most of the wild animals of Hindostan are found here. The elephants are generally from ten to eleven feet in height. The uses to which these noble animals are applied are innumerable. Besides carrying all sorts of burdens in peace and war, they are employed in thinning plantations, or clearing away forests, which they do by pulling up the trees with their trunks.

There are several ways of taking elephants practised

in Ceylon, the simplest of which is noosing them in an open forest. For this purpose, the hunters steal up to him against the wind, as he is very quick of scent, carrying strong nooses of bullock's hide. Having got close to the animal's flank, they watch an opportunity, either when he starts off or attempts to turn round, of slipping the noose under his hind foot, at the same time taking a turn round a tree with the other end of the rope. The animal stumbles, and before he can recover himself, additional hide ropes are fixed to his other legs. The elephant is then secured to the nearest tree, and a shed is erected over him, unless tame ones are used to escort him to the stable. After being caught, he becomes tame in the course of eight days. In some provinces they are hunted in great numbers, and driven into kraals, as the American Indians formerly hunted the deer. For this purpose, a great multitude of people surround a wide extent of territory, in a semicircular chain, and drive the elephants toward the kraal. The hunters advance as the animals retire, till their two wings reach the extremities of the enclosure. By noise during the day, and fires at night, the encompassed animals are gradually driven into closer limits, and, unable to escape from the confinement except by a narrow issue purposely left open, they rush into a funnel-shaped passage, where, being unable to turn round, they are easily secured.

The Cingalese, or aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon, dwell in the interior. Their features differ little from those of Europeans: their color varies from light brown to black, and they have almost universally hazel eyes. The Malabars, or Hindoos, who invaded

the island from the opposite shore, are in possession of the northern and eastern coasts. The Moors, or descendants of the Arabs, are dispersed all over the island. There are also some Malays, Caffres, and Javanese: to these are to be added the Europeans in the English settlements along the coast. The total population of the island is short of a million; but it appears that the number of inhabitants has been diminishing for the last four or five centuries. The annals of the Cingalese have been preserved for above twenty-three centuries, and describe the erection and construction of all those extensive works, — cities, temples, tanks, &c., — whose ruins and numerous inscriptions remain to verify the historical records. During a great portion of that long period, the natives appear to have remained stationary, or to have retrograded in the arts.

In the sixth century, Ceylon was the chief mart of commerce in the East: its central situation brought to its ports the ships of India, China, and Arabia. When the Portuguese first visited the island in 1505, they found it had for a long period been declining, in consequence of intestine wars, and invasions from Malabar and Arabia. The Cingalese king obtained the assistance of the Portuguese to expel the invaders, and paid them an annual tribute in cinnamon. The Portuguese soon established themselves in the island, and obtained possession of all the maritime provinces, which they held securely during a century. In 1603, the Dutch took part with the king of Kandy against them, and a series of wars ensued, which, at the end of fifty years, resulted in the complete expulsion of the Portuguese

from Ceylon. The Cingalese, however, soon discovered that they had not benefited themselves by the change of masters. For a century and a half, hostilities were carried on between the Dutch and the natives; and in 1796, the British, in their turn, came to the aid of the Kandians. The same scene was acted over again. The Dutch were expelled, and the British were soon at war with their allies. The Kandian capital was taken in 1803; but, shortly after, the natives rose against the conquerors, drove them out of the city, surrounded the whole British force, and compelled them to lay down their arms, after which they massacred them all, with the exception of three or four men. After this disaster, the British still retained possession of the maritime provinces, while the king of Kandy kept the interior; but in 1815, he was deposed by the Kandian chiefs for his cruelty, and the British were invited by them to take possession of his kingdom. The whole island is now established under the British sway.

JAPAN.

Marco Polo, as we have already remarked, was the first person who made this region known to Europeans. He called it Cipango, from its Chinese name Jih-pun-kwo, meaning Country of the Rising Sun, it being situated east of China. The empire of Japan consists of three principal islands, Niphon, Kiusiu, and Sikokf, which are surrounded by a multitude of smaller ones. Niphon, the largest, is about sixteen hundred miles long, but of moderate breadth. The Japanese islands embrace an extent of territory about double that of the island of Great Britain. These islands are full of mountains and hills, and the coasts are beset with steep rocks, which render them difficult of access. Besides these craggy shores, there are dangerous whirlpools, and no part of the ocean is subject to heavier gales than the sea which surrounds Japan, where they often blow with the fury of hurricanes. The cautious policy of the government goes even beyond that of the Chinese in declining intercourse with foreigners, so that our knowledge of this people is very scanty. What little we know of them has been received through the hands of the Dutch, who are the only strangers, except the Chinese, now permitted to trade with them. The Dutch have a commercial es-

tablishment, called Dezima, in the harbor of Nagasaki, and are obliged to send, every four years, an embassy to Yedo, the capital, which gives them an opportunity of examining, though imperfectly, a part of the southern coast of Niphon.

All accounts of travellers agree in assigning to Japan an enormous population. The laws enjoin agriculture as one of the rigorous duties of the inhabitants; in consequence, every spot of land is under cultivation, except the tops of the most inaccessible mountains. Being exempt from all feudal and ecclesiastical exactions, the farmer cultivates the soil with zeal and success. No portion of the territory lies in common. If a field is neglected by its owner, his more industrious neighbor is at liberty to take possession of it. The climate of Japan is such that tropical plants grow side by side with those of Southern Europe. The territory is indented by seas, and intersected by lakes and rivers, swarming with every animal production of the water; and from these sources a plentiful supply of food is afforded to a population estimated at thirty-four millions. The country abounds in mineral wealth. Gold seems to be very plentiful in several provinces, but the working of gold mines is discouraged by the government. Silver is more scarce; but copper, containing much gold, is worked to a great extent, and supplies the most important article of exportation. There is also some iron and tin, but not in great quantity. The Japan porcelain clay is superior to that of China, and the shores afford pearls and ambergris.

Japan is a feudal empire, and governed in the strict-

est spirit of feudality. The Mikado, or Dairie, as the successor and representative of the gods, is the nominal proprietor, as well as sovereign, of the nation. The Ziogoon is his deputy, or vicegerent. His dominions are divided, except those portions reserved to the crown, into principalities held in vassalage by their respective hereditary princes. Under these the land is parceled out among the nobility, who hold their hereditary estates by military service. The government, in its general character, is of course despotic; liberty is unknown in Japan; it does not exist even in the common intercourse of man with man; and the very idea of freedom, as distinguished from rude license, could perhaps hardly be made intelligible to a Japanese. But, on the other hand, no individual in the whole nation, high or low, is above the law. The supreme Mikado, and his lieutenant, the Ziogoon, are as completely enthralled by the despotism of the government, as the meanest of their subjects. Law, and established custom, ever unchanged, known to all, and pressing upon all alike, are the despots of Japan. Scarcely an action of life is exempt from their rigid, inflexible, and irksome control; but he who complies with their dictates has no arbitrary power, no capricious tyranny, to apprehend. The Mikado resides a perpetual prisoner in his palace in the city of Meaco, except on the rare occasion of a visit to a certain temple. It is said that he never sets his foot upon the earth, nor allows the sun to shine upon him. His pipe is smoked but once, when a new one is substituted; and the dishes from which he has eaten are immediately broken, like the teacup which Dr. Johnson threw into the fire. The Ziogoon is

also closely shut up in the great palace of Yedo. On the supposition that the affairs of his subjects are beneath his notice, he is surrounded by a circle of guards and ceremonies, which effectually prevent him from employing his royal leisure in any such ignominious pursuit as public business. All other places of residence appear mean and unworthy in comparison with the royal palace, and he is therefore never allowed to leave it. The real executive power is in the hands of a council of state.

The great feature of the social polity of Japan is the hereditary nature of all employments, avocations, and situations in life, and the consequent absence of most of those incentives of ambition which form the life-blood of society among the Western nations. There is one profession, which, like the caste of the Pariahs in India, remains under a ban or stigma — that of the tanners; all intercourse with them is forbidden, and the executioners are chosen exclusively from their ranks. From some peculiar prejudice, originating probably in the Sintoo doctrine of defilement by contact with death, the dealers in hides and leather are not permitted to dwell in towns or hamlets with other men, but inhabit villages exclusively their own, from which they are called into the towns only to discharge the functions of executioners and jailers. They are not allowed to pollute an inn or public house with their presence, but, when in want of refreshment on a journey, they are served on the outside with what they purchase, and the landlord would rather throw away than take back a vessel from which one of them has drank. They are not even numbered in the census of the population;

and, what is still more singular, their villages, when situated upon the high road, are not measured into the length of that road, but the distance is subtracted from it as a nonentity, so that, in paying by the mile between town and town, for the relays of men and cattle stationed at the post-houses, the traveller is actually carried *gratis* through the villages inhabited by manufacturers of leather. We doubt if there exists another instance where a whim has been followed out to the full extent in so grave a manner.

The Japanese are altogether a gay and social people, and their somewhat cumbrous modes of politeness, and their love for compliments, appear but to promote good fellowship. The position of women in Japan seems to be unlike what it is in all other Eastern countries, and to constitute an intermediate link between European and Asiatic manners. Japanese women are subjected to no seclusion; they hold a fair station in society, and share in all the innocent recreations of their fathers and husbands. The fidelity of the wife and the purity of the maiden are committed to their own sense of honor, which is perhaps strengthened by the certainty of death attending every lapse from virtue. A faithless wife, we are told, is a phenomenon unknown in Japan. The minds of the women are as carefully cultivated as those of the men; and among the most admired authors, historians, moralists, and poets, are found many female names. To these estimable qualities in the Japanese character we may add filial piety.

The arts are more advanced in Japan than in China; the best specimens of Japanese ingenuity and skill never leave that country, the articles exported being

of a very inferior character. Every thing which is wanted for the use of the people is manufactured in the country, on the principle of never being dependent on foreigners for the smallest necessary of life. Foreign commerce is forbidden to the Japanese, and the construction of vessels is limited by law to such a size and shape as suits only a coasting voyage. The internal trade, on the other hand, is very active, on account of the variety of productions afforded by the country, resulting from its great variety of climate.

The most ancient religion of Japan is that of the Sintoo, who was deemed the offspring of the sun, and was the founder of the ancient royal family, and of the empire. But the greater part of the inhabitants have embraced Buddhism, which seems to have been introduced from Corea, at a very remote epoch. There are also many followers of Confucius. A religious dispute is never heard of here, nor do the Japanese ever bear each other any hatred on religious grounds. They esteem it, on the contrary, an act of courtesy to visit, from time to time, each other's gods, and do them reverence.

The Japanese must, on the whole, be allowed a decided superiority over the Chinese. All travellers, who have been acquainted with both nations, prefer the former. They find them less cowardly, proud, cunning, and deceitful, and of a more manly and open character. In cleanliness and industry, both nations are equal. The Japanese show a great desire for knowledge, and their institutions for instructing the lower classes seem not to be inferior to those of any

nation on the globe. Indigence and pauperism are said to be almost unknown.

The first Europeans who visited Japan were the Portuguese. At that time foreigners were not rigidly excluded from the empire, as at present, and the Portuguese had no difficulty in introducing missionaries into the country. At their head was that extraordinary apostolic Jesuit, afterwards canonized for his great and triumphant exertions in converting the heathen, St. Francis Xavier. The missionary labors of the Jesuits were crowned with such success that Christianity seemed to have obtained a firm footing in Japan, and within about half a century from its introduction, the Christian converts were reckoned at above two hundred thousand, among whom were found princes, and generals, and the flower of the nobility. Even the heir of the Ziogoonship is said to have been half a convert. But, a civil war breaking out, the native Christians embraced the weaker side, and the consequence was a violent persecution. The Dutch, in the mean time, had established a factory at Firato, under the protection of the prince of that district. In 1637, a rebellion broke out in the principality of Arima, where the population was almost exclusively Christian. The prince of Arima, finding himself unable to reduce the insurgents, obtained the assistance of a Dutch man-of-war, and with this help put down the rebellion. The result was the total expulsion of the Portuguese, and the extirpation of Christianity, against which the Japanese, down to the present day, have maintained so inextinguishable a hatred, that the ceremony of trampling on the cross is

annually performed, to keep alive the remembrance of the above events.

As the Japanese did not consider the Christianity of the Dutch to be the same with that of the Portuguese, and as the former had rendered the government a signal service, they were permitted to continue their factory in Japan. It was, therefore, removed from Firato to Dezima, a small, artificial island in the Bay of Nagasaki, at first occupied by the Portuguese. Here the Dutch establishment remains at the present day, and they are the only Europeans who are allowed to hold any intercourse whatever with Japan. The trade is carried on by means of a single ship, which sails once a year from Java. The exports from Japan are chiefly copper, camphor, japanned ware, china, and silk. The Chinese are also allowed to trade at Nagasaki.

For upwards of a century, the chief officer of the Dutch factory, with a large retinue, made an annual journey to Yedo, the capital, to offer his tribute and homage at the foot of the throne. But, as the trade between Japan and Batavia fell off, these annual journeys were felt to be burdensome; and, since 1790, they have been limited to every fourth year. The presents of the Dutch, being esteemed of more value than their homage, were not so easily dispensed with; and these are duly transmitted during the intermediate years by means of interpreters. The journey to Yedo is, nevertheless, the occasion upon which the European dignitary enjoys the most honorable distinctions ever conceded to him, and the least liberty — a privation which, in Japan, invariably accompanies honors.

While upon the road, he is treated with the respect due to a prince, but is not allowed to deviate from his direct course, nor to make excursions to indulge his curiosity at any place where he may stop.

Dr. Thunberg, who accompanied the Dutch embassy to Yedo in 1776, says, "I saw with astonishment a people which we consider, if not in a state of barbarism, at least as unpolished, exhibit in every instance the marks of perfect order and rational, circumspect reflection; while we, in our more enlightened quarter of the globe, are every where deficient in good regulations tending to the convenience and ease of travellers. Excepting in Holland, I never made so pleasant a journey as this, considering the beauty and delightful appearance of the country. The immense swarms of population, and the cultivation of the territory, surpass all the power of language to describe. The whole country, on both sides of us as far as we could see, was nothing but a fertile field, and the whole of our long day's journey extended through villages of which one began where the other ended. I had imagined that, during so long a journey, in a country to which Europeans have seldom any access, I should have been able to collect a great number of scarce and unknown plants; but I was never in my life so much disappointed. In most of the fields, which were now sown, I could not discover the least trace of weeds, not even throughout whole provinces. A traveller would imagine that no weeds ever grow in Japan; but the industrious farmers are indefatigable in pulling them up, so that the most sharp-sighted botanist can hardly discover any uncommon plant in their well-cultivated

fields. Weeds and fences are equally uncommon in this country — a region, surely, in this respect, inexpressibly fortunate."

Yedo, the capital, is the largest city in the world. Thunberg states it to be sixty-three miles in circumference. The population is variously estimated by different travellers, some of them carrying it as high as eight millions. An idea of the enormous extent of the city may be formed from the following fact: During the residence of the Dutch embassy at Yedo, in 1772, a fire broke out, which extended *eighteen miles* in length and *nine* in breadth. Mr. Doeff, the Dutch ambassador, who visited Yedo in 1806, also gives the following account of a fire: "There is here an extensive dealer in silks named Itsigoia, who has large establishments, besides, in all the other great cities of the empire. Any customer who conveys his purchase to another of these cities, — Nagasaki, for example, — and repents of his bargain, may give up the goods, and receive back the purchase-money in full. The wealth of this man must be enormous, as the following will show: During my residence at Yedo, there occurred a vast fire, which consumed every thing within a space nine miles in length, and a mile and a half in breadth; among the rest, our lodging. Itsigoia lost his entire shop and a warehouse containing more than one hundred thousand bales of silk thread; which loss was unmitigated, for the Japanese know nothing of insurance. He, nevertheless, sent to our assistance forty of his servants, who were of great use to us; and on the second day he was already actively engaged in rebuilding his premises, paying every carpenter six florins a day."

This fire is more particularly described in another passage. "On the 22d of April, about ten in the morning, we heard that a fire had broken out about two leagues from our lodging. We paid little attention to this, as the inhabitants of Yedo are very skilful in the extinction of fires. In fine weather there is generally a fire every night, and as this happens not so often in rainy weather, the citizens generally wish one another joy of a wet evening. In this instance, however, the fire made rapid advances, and, towards three in the afternoon, the flames, excited by a strong breeze, broke out in four places in our neighborhood. We had, since one o'clock, been employed in packing up our effects, so that we were able to betake ourselves immediately to flight, for the danger was pressing. On issuing into the street, we saw every thing in flames. There was great danger in endeavoring to escape before the wind, in the same direction with the fire; we therefore took an oblique course through a street already burning, and thus succeeded, by following the flame, in gaining an open field called Hara. It was studded all over with the standards of princes whose palaces had been destroyed, and whose wives and children had fled thither for refuge. We followed their example, and marked out a spot with our Dutch flags. We had now a full view of the fire, and never have I seen any thing so terrific: the terrors of the ocean of flame were augmented by the heart-rending cries of the women and children." This fire, after raging for twelve hours, was extinguished by rain. Fifty-seven princes' palaces were destroyed, and twelve hundred lives lost, many persons being drowned by

the giving way of the Nipon Bas, a famous bridge in Yedo, under the weight of the flying multitude.

Except the eleven individuals of the Dutch factory, and the few Chinese, who trade to Nagasaki, no foreigners can obtain any intercourse with Japan. A strange vessel approaching the coast is fired upon, and, if driven into a harbor by stress of weather, she is ordered off as soon as possible. During the war between England and Holland, in the early part of the present century, the British cruisers prevented all Dutch ships from sailing to Japan, and the intercourse between Batavia and Nagasaki was carried on by American vessels hired for that purpose. Captain Stewart, who commanded one of these, made an attempt, in 1803, to trade under the American flag on his own account. He sailed to Nagasaki with a cargo avowedly American property, and solicited permission to trade, and to supply himself with fresh water and oil. The first request was promptly refused; the second was granted; and when his wants were gratuitously supplied, he was compelled to depart. Another attempt was made, in 1837, by some American merchants from Macao. The vessel which they despatched had on board some shipwrecked Japanese sailors, and the restoration of these men to their homes would, it was thought, furnish the means for opening an intercourse with the country. But this attempt, likewise, utterly failed. Wherever the vessel showed herself, she was fired upon and driven to sea.

The Russians have been equally unsuccessful in similar attempts. About the year 1780, a Japanese vessel was wrecked near the Aleutian Islands; the crew were

saved, and sent to Siberia, where they were kept ten years. At last, the Empress Catharine determined to send them back to their native country, and to improve this opportunity of attempting to open a commercial intercourse with Japan. An ambassador was accordingly sent out in 1792, with the Japanese crew. He succeeded in gaining admission into the country; but was informed, by the authorities, that he might leave the men in Japan, or take them back to Russia, as he pleased; for, according to the Japanese laws, such persons cannot be claimed by their countrymen, it being a principle of those laws, that a man belongs to that territory on which fate has thrown him, and where he has been preserved from death. The attempt to open a commercial intercourse did not succeed; and, in 1804, another embassy was sent by the Emperor Alexander, carrying also a number of shipwrecked Japanese and a quantity of costly presents. The embassy was allowed to land; but the government refused to listen to the proposals respecting trade, declined to accept the presents, and requested that if, in future, any Japanese should be wrecked on the Russian coast, they might be sent home by the Dutch ships which sailed from Batavia.

In 1811, the Russians sent a sloop of war, under the command of Captain Golownin, on an exploring voyage to the Kurile Islands. The captain and a boat's crew fell into the hands of the Japanese, and were made prisoners. They were carried from place to place, and, though strictly guarded, had an opportunity of seeing many portions of the country never visited by the Dutch embassies. They were every where the objects

of a most lively curiosity; the people at every station assembling round them, asking them a thousand questions, and writing down the answers. Captain Golownin was induced to think the Japanese one of the most enlightened people in the world. Reading appeared to be universal among them: even the common soldiers, on guard, read almost incessantly; the favorite study appeared to be history, both natural and political. The Russians, after a detention of more than two years, obtained their liberty.

In 1808, the British frigate Phaëton appeared off Nagasaki under Dutch colors. As the usual Dutch trader was expected at that time, some Dutch and Japanese went on board her without suspicion. The Dutchmen were made prisoners, and the Japanese were sent back with a demand for provisions. The Dutch persuaded the governor to comply with this demand, in order to save the lives of their countrymen, as, according to their account, the English captain threatened to hang the prisoners, whom he had captured by treachery, if the provisions were not delivered before night. The supply was accordingly sent; and the Japanese governor made preparations for attacking and setting fire to the frigate; but the imperial guard-house, by some negligence, did not contain the necessary force, and a favorable wind enabled the frigate to make her escape before a sufficient body of troops could be summoned from the neighborhood. Within half an hour after her departure, the governor redeemed himself from impending disgrace, and his family from an inheritance of infamy, by the terrible expedient which Japanese custom dictates on such

occasions — he ripped up his own bowels, and the example was followed by all the officers of the neglected post. This occurrence has excited the strongest antipathy of the Japanese against the English ; and there is reason to believe that, if any individuals of that nation should be cast upon the shores of Japan, they would find themselves, as Englishmen, exempted from the benefits of that code of mercy and hospitality which, to a certain degree, is extended towards other persons in similar circumstances.

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It is an admirable publication for the family and school library. Its topics are interesting and important, and presented in a simple but effective style.

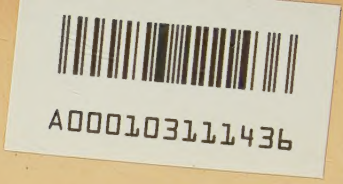
From the Boston Atlas,

Parley's Cabinet Library is worthy of all encouragement. It is cheap not only in promise, but in fact. It is also calculated to exercise a wholesome influence. Like every thing from the same author, it strongly inculcates virtue and religion, and at the same time it arrays truth in a guise so comely and attractive, that it is likely to win many votaries of fiction to companionship with it. There is great need of such works at this time

BOARD OF EDUCATION, }
City of Rochester, Sept. 2. }

Whereas, the Board of Education have examined a series of books called "Parley's Cabinet Library," now in course of publication by Samuel G. Goodrich, Esq., (the celebrated Peter Parley,) embracing, in the course of twenty volumes, the various subjects of history, biography, geography, the manners and customs of different nations, the condition of the arts, sciences, &c.; and whereas, this Board are satisfied that the same are highly useful to the young: therefore,

Resolved, that we recommend that the same be procured by trustees for the several school libraries, at the earliest practicable period. A true copy of the minutes, I. F. MACK, Sup't.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